DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 290 834 CE 048 855

AUTHOR	Steward, T. G.; Alexander, D. J.
TITLE	Information and Guidance on Adult Learning Opportunities in Scotland: A Study of Issues and Current Provision.
INSTITUTION	Edinburgh Univ. (Scotland).
SPONS AGENCY	Scottish Education Dept., Edinburgh.
PUB DATE	Aug 87
NOTE	141p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; *Adult Programs; Adult Students; Continuing Education; Delivery Systems; Distance Education; Educational Needs; *Educational Policy; *Educational Trends; Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Government Role; Guidance Programs; Institutional Cooperation; Lifelong Learning; Policy Formation; *Post High School Guidance; Postsecondary Education; *Program Improvement; Technological Advancement
IDENTIFIERS	*Scotland

ABSTRACT

This report is an overview of the current state of adult education and guidance in Scotland, focusing on issues and problems and suggesting methods of helping more adults take advantage of educational opportunities. The report is organized in six chapters. The first chapter surveys policy and conceptual issues in the development of guidance for adult learning. Topics explored include developments in adult and continuing education in Scotland, the challenge of change, local structures, organization and resources, and issues for consideration in policymaking. Chapter 2 focuses on developments, innovations, and issues in guidance in Renfrew, and Chapter 3 covers the same material for Lothian. Information technology and innovatory approaches are the subjects of the fourth chapter. Issues raised in this chapter concern current arrangements, barriers to development, a paradigm shift in guidance, national coherence, and delivery system improvement. Chapter 5 reports on a survey of current arrangements in provision of guidance, and the final chapter contains a summary and conclusion with recommendations. The questionnaire and responses from the survey described in Chapter 5 are provided in appendices. (KC)

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INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE ON ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN SCOTLAND: A STUDY OF ISSUES AND CURRENT PROVISION

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Department of Education

University of Edinburgh

A report for the Scottish Education Department.

August 1987.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to the Scottish Education Department for the support that they gave this project. We would particularly like to thank Mrs. Judith Duncan from the Scottish Education Department for her understanding of our difficulties in completing the research as quickly as we had orginally planned.

A combination of factors led to this delay, including an over commitment of tasks for the researchers and the rapid development of the field under study.

Our purposes in undertaking this research involved our concern that large proportions of adults in Scotland were and are by passed in terms of effective access to a full range of adult learning opportunities.

We would also like to thank our students over the past two years for their understanding and for their valuable discussion of the issues raised. Our thanks are also due to the many participants who gave their time and interest to the study. To them we are particularly sorry for the delay in publication.

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CHAPTER 1: POLICY AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDANCE FOR ADULT LEARNING

There have over the last ten years been major developments in the nature and structure of adult learning opportunities in Scotland. These developments have been of such a kind as to focus the attention of policy-makers, advisors and practitioners on the significance of creating comprehensive national and local guidance programmes in an attempt to create more effective access for adults. Educational guidance for adults has been a neglected area in the past. It is clear from evidence on participation in for example the Russell (1974) and Alexander (1975) Reports (1) (2); ACACE 'Continuing Education: From Policies to Practice', 1982 (3); and our own research 'A Study of Policy, Organisation and Provision in Community Education and Leisure and Recreation in three Scottish Regions' (1984) (4) that participation in Adult Education and Community Education still remains relatively low. Traditional non-participants are not being reached in significant numbers despite some areas of effective and responsive practice. One factor in this sustained unrepresentative pattern of participation is the lack or inappropriateness of information and guidance programmes.

Developments in Adult and Continuing Education in Scotland

In Scotland, despite some evidence of innovative and responsive practice among the more traditional agencies (W.E.A., A.B.E., Extra-Mural Departments) financial cut-backs are presently restraining developments. There is at least a 50% reduction in traditional, local authority I.F.E. programmes since 1977 (5), offset to some extent and at certain levels by developments in mainstream community education and in the work of the W.E.A. and universities. A.B.E. in particular, despite its effectiveness in reaching traditional non-participants and the way in which it responsively builds guidance and curriculum development into its work has not in our view been given the financial and human resource priority it deserves, both in its own right and as a basis for creating effective access to further opportunities in continuing education.

However there have been major developments in continuing education for adults in the form of the 16+ modular programme, Open Learning, Flexi-study, Open Tech, MSC provision, developments in Advanced and Non-Advanced F.E., and some marginal developments in the Universities which may become more important in quantitative terms as the implications of the STEAC report are worked upon. The very flexibility of the 16+ modular system and

the fact that Adult Education courses could be offered under this framework in a way that is potentially open to attracting credit in the National Certificate Scheme means that much of the traditional curriculum of Adult Education becomes capable of being recognised by the Formal Education sector. Credit transfer and return of adult learners into the formal sector thus may become less rare and difficult (6). We may then be in the process of placing Continuing Education for adults more fully on the mainstream educational agenda.

It may now be more generally perceived that we require to develop a coherent, developmental, and accessible structure of adult and continuing education in which unhelpful, false and unnecessary distinctions between vocational and non-vocational education or between education and training are removed, as if these were in some way oppositional and competitive rather than potentially linked and complementary. There are important questions to be asked, particularly perhaps in relation to curricula, about the apparent by-passing or further marginalisation of more traditional adult education agencies including Adult Basic Education and the 'tacking-on' of the education of adults to the original 16-18 Action Plan expanded to the 16+ programme. But this development preceded in Strathclyde by the Strategy for Post-Compulsory Education and Training 1981, taken together with the other programmes noted above, are welcome in-so-far as they produce :

(a) more open and distance learning

(b) flexibility and adaptability

(c) responsiveness (particularly in relation to curriculum development)

(d) credit transfer

(e) genuinely sequential and high quality modular courses

(f) increased access

(g) dismantlement of age-barriers

(h) more comprehensive and continuing provision

To the extent, however, that current programmes and trends emphasise the following, they seem not to form a valid basis for adult and continuing education.

(a) emphasising a false dichotomy between vocational and non-vocational education

(b) maintaining a separation between education and training or redefining education to mean vocational education

(c) relying solely on the needs of industry and the economy

(d) focusing only on the working life

(e) affording a labyrinthine and discontinuous provision

(f) emphasising a narrow vocational skill training at the expense of more cognitive and developmeNtal curricula

(g) excluding systematic learning not directly and economically related to work

(h) failing to integrate better with initial education and training

(i) distorting existing provision and practice at random

But, to the extent that Scotland is able to develop appropriate and responsive guidance programmes, the negative factors above may be minimised.

The Challenge of Change (UDACE, 1986) and Issues in Scotland

It is not intended here to summarise the whole of what is already a concise document but the 'Challenge of Change' (7) is a significant and most useful piece of work on the development of educational guidance for adults, and should be read together with this report. Its salient points and recommendations include the following to which we add our comments and criticism.

The UDACE report takes the view that :-

> (a) Alternatives to a full range of formal, non-formal and informal educational opportunities which assist adults to develop their knowledge and skills represent a waste of human resources. If educators and providers attempt to develop these opportunities without basing them on personal 'needs' and 'wishes', waste will also occur. Effective guidance programmes are essential and integral to the effectiveness and validity of more comprehensive programmes of learning and represent 'value for money'. Guidance then should be an integral part of educational policy, programmes and budgetting and not tacked on as an optional extra. Educational guidance is a means of helping individuals clarify their needs and interests and assisting them through the present labyrinth of regulations, entrance requirements and grants.

But for us most importantly in both conceptual and practical

terms, guidance should uncover unmet and latent intentions and enable providers to respond in terms of both access and curricula.

It is in our view important to develop and emphasise the meanings and assumptions involved here as there may otherwise be a temptation for busy administrators and educators to adopt a too mechanical view of matching 'needs' to 'learning opportunities' and an underestimation of the central importance of curriculum.

The task of educators in meeting needs of clients would be a purely technical and administrative one, if needs were unproblematic and value free. Were this the case, the role of guidance would be limited to one of alerting clients and facilitating access to those parts of the curriculum which most closely approximated to their perceived 'needs'. Familiarity with the taken-for-granted curriculum available would be the chief area of expertise of guidance personnel.

However, needs are neither unproblematic nor value free. They arise from the intentions, goals and purposes of clients which in turn are based upon value judgements and (incomplete) information and are constrained by social and economic circumstance. If the educator involved in guidance concerns him/herself with the context of perceived needs, and attempts, collaboratively with the client, to elicidate their basis - a process which will inevitably modify the needs themselves - then the relation of needs-response to curriculum, changes. It will no longer be a straightforward technical matter of matching items in an existing menu to the perceived needs of the client; rather these latter will suggest modifications in, and additions to, the menu itself. This engenders a process of curriculum renewal in which the client's situation is taken account of, though that is of course not the only factor to be accounted for in the curricular development process. *

This does lead us to the importance of guidance. However a concentration on guidance and on what appear to be 'progressive' and 'democratic' learning techniques and packages such as those claimed for Open Learning, the 16+ programme and the related use of 'hi' and 'lo' tech still leaves aside central questions concerning who is gaining effective access to what kind of knowledge. Unless guidance workers and 'providers' feed back into a high quality curriculum development programme the educational and social intentions of adults, they may not be successful in involving, for example, many of the 59% of adults in Scotland who at present have no contact with education after school and the estimated 300,000 who may lack basic educational skills. That is, the fundamental question for guidance workers' must be not merely one of helping to create effective access but one of 'access to what?' Information and advice, and the nature and content of curricula, are then not separate items on a list of

guidance functions - they are inseparable. If treated in isolation, neither can be valid or effective. Educational institutions, 'providers' and guidance workers must take analyses of the significance of 'intentions' and 'purposes' seriously. If they do not and merely pay lip-service to them, guidance initiatives will develop from a fundamentally flawed basis. We would stress that this is not a theoretical point to be dismissed or forgotten in the hurly burly of everyday practice and battles for funding. Our strategies and practice must be soundly based or they will fail.

* (We would like to acknowledge the assistance of our colleague, Dr Ruth Jonathan, in clarifying our writing and thinking in this paragraph.)

(b) Care then must be taken and priority given to ensuring that a universal open entry service is dominated by those most able to use it and who have already had effective access to education. When resources are tight, services are particularly vulnerable to this danger and this is well demonstrated by analyses of current particiption in adult education. The UDACE report is therefore clear that positive steps must be taken to include those who have benefited least (8).

A major criterion of effectiveness will be how far guidance effectively reaches traditional non-participants. Outreach work of a substantial nature will be required. Expertise and organisation in this area is limited in Scotland and developments will have to take this criterion into account. This will involve decisions on priorities and the allocation of human and financial resources. A philosophy of 'being open to all' will not be sufficient.

(c) The 'training purposes of adults are dependent on adequate education' and distinctions between the two may not be valuable (9). What is important is the development of the confidence to learn: an understanding of the knowledge base from which skills derive and an understanding of the purposes for which skills are to be utilised. Skills are not discrete, free-standing or neutral. If they are taught as if they were discrete, learners may not have the capacity to generate new skills in the future which would be neither efficient nor economic.

(d) The broad definition of guidance includes Informing, Advising, Counselling, Assessing, Enabling, Advocating and Feeding Back.(10) Counselling, however, may be in danger of being loosely used in practice.

We accept the broad definition of guidance and that it must be client and group centred. The latter will be particularly important in outreach work and in working with popular and voluntary organisations such as Shelter, Child Poverty Action and Age Concern.

(e) The major policy recommendation is for the development of properly funded national and local collaborative networks of concerned agencies to provide a comprehensive, client-centred, confidential, open and accessible, free, independent and widely publicised guidance organisation for all adults. It is recommended that a National Unit be established funded by the DES and the Department of Employment. Local authorities should establish, with help in funding from the DES, Local Guidance Units to formalise collaborative networks and create an extensive range of contact points (10).

It is considered that 'core' agencies in the network will include providers of learning opportunities, the Careers Service, the Library Service and Educational Guidance Services where they exist. Specialist agencies involved are such services as the Materials and Resources Information Service (MARIS) and Job Centres offering a more limited range of information. 'General' agencies which provide guidance on a wide range of topics including education such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and Social Services should be involved in the network. The report takes the view that no one organisational pattern is appropriate for all areas.

It is envisaged that guidance networks would be supported by a comprehensive information base on learning opportunities including those available outside the local area. The network should have or have access to information on employment opportunities and trends, grants, benefits and regulations which affect accessibility (11).

The UDACE report considers that however willing agencies may be to cooperate, formal arrangements to provide financial, professional and operational support are necessary if enthusiasm and commitment are to be maintained. The network will therefore require servicing from a central body and Local Educational Guidance Units are proposed which would be independent of any single partner to guarantee impartiality and to foster a client centred service. Although networks may differ according to local circumstances and strengths, it is considered that the Unit should have the following functions:

(a) Information dissemination in the network.

(b) Information collection and coordination.

(c) Staff Development,training and coordination of training.

(d) Monitoring.

(e) Feedback to providers.

(f) Promotion.

(g) Servicing the network's management bodies.

The Unit should itself be a direct provider of a full range of guidance activities. This is not only valuable in itself but is essential to credibility and to training and monitoring functions (12).

It should be funded by local and central government but be responsible to an independent governing or managing group with representation from the local authority, concerned agencies, learners and employers. The report is clear that permanent funding and staff are required. Experience shows that short-term funding is damaging to continuity and the confidence of both providing agencies and members of the public (13).

Our study confirms this view. Lack of continuity is particularly damaging to the interests of traditional non-participants who are alienated and let-down by short-term project work.

It is considered that the Unit could be an entirely new agency or based on an appropriate existing service such as the Library or Careers Service which could lay claim to the necessary independence and some relevant skills and experience (14).

UDACE also proposes a National Guidance Unit to bring together and service a national network of concerned agencies including the local authorities who are seen as the principal partners in local networks, employers and T.U. organisations, MARIS, ECCTIS, national providers such as the O.U. and broadcasters, National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, National Association of Educational Guidance Services, the Further Education Unit, the MSC, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Institute of Careers Officers and central government departments such as the DES (15).

It is considered that the national functions should not be split but be undertaken by one body, which need not

necessarily be a newly created one, but which is capable of developing cooperative relationships with the appropriate agencies. Its functions include information gathering and dissemination, consultancy, monitoring and evaluation, staff development and training, sponsoring innovative projects, research and development, publicity, provision of a national forum and provision of advice to central government.

UDACE is clear that a National Unit should be involved in the collection and disseminationof some kinds of educational information at national level, however, it is anxious to separate the National Unit from Data Bases such as ECCTIS, MARIS and TAPS etc . There is a lack of clarity, it seems to us, concerning what kinds of information are involved and it does not recommend that the Unit be directly involved in the management of such information. But it considers that a National Unit should consider and respond to the 'need' for a national referral service.

Full-time permanent staffing is again required together with an independent managing body.

In England and Wales there has been no one model of development for local units (16). Guidance has developed in relation to socio-economic and geographic factors, the enthusiasm of individuals and the varying strengths of concerned agencies. Much development has taken place on minimal funding and has been dependent on volunteer effort and enthusiasts who may or may not be employed by concerned agencies. Awareness has been raised at a local level of the need for guidance. Frequently a working party of concerned agencies has been formed and a network of enthusiasts have put together directories, brochures and referral services of various kinds. These informal networks reach the point where they require financial resources to establish a physical and professional base at a central referral point or unit. Any person involved at the central unit has a major responsibility for accuracy of information, advice and counselling. Funds at this point are required for at least two full-time permanent posts - one to coordinate the network and provide advice and the other to develop an information base.

If funds are obtained for two such posts experience does show that they must not represent any one power base or vested interest and be seen to be servicing and coordinating the network rather than controlling it. It is preferable if the coordination function is not located in a specific agency. The task is to locate the information which is already available in the network on educational opportunities, grants, jobs, rights, regulations etc., to move the information round the network and ensure that clients have access to it. The work of the local unit should include inter-agency and joint training and direct

work with the public. Joint training work provides what is described as an efficient 'glue' for the network as well as developing particular skills.

Shop-front units have proved successful but outreach work is required if all sectors of the community are to be reached. We consider that what is required in addition to an educational information base is a socio-economic analysis of the local area and the development of clearer understandings of the relationships between this analysis and the way in which individuals and groups perceive their life chances in terms of educational opportunities being offered.

It is clear that, if local authorities accept the central and integral role of guidance in education, then there will have to be an allocation and/or reallocation of resources. If guidance is central, it will have to be resourced as such and senior, skilled staff appointed to permanent guidance positions.

Our view is that, despite financial cut-backs, in England and Wales much of the pressure for the creation of guidance networks has come from established adult education services and related agencies who have developed networks on a part-time or volunteer basis. In Scotland adult education services and career structures for adult educators are less well established. As a result there may be a much lower capacity for developments in guidance to be based on part-time and volunteer effort in already starved services. Development is then more likely to come as a result of a clear policy and decisive resource allocation from the Scottish Office and local authorities. The creation of effective guidance cannot be left to part-time effort, short-term money, patching arrangements and fortune in finding enthusiasts.

We wish at this stage to make the following points on the recommendations in the Challenge of Change as they in part informed the directions in which we conducted the research into policy and programmes in Scotland.

Despite initiatives in for example SCET, Network and the Library Services most of the guidance provided by the agencies concerned in these developments remains largely uncoordinated and fragmented. The apparently easy answer is for concerned agencies to group together and create a cooperative network of professionals and volunteers within and between institutions and in the field which may provide comprehensive and accurate information and develop advice and counselling functions at both local, national and UK geographic levels. In principle Open Learning programmes, those of the National Extension College for

example, claim to be nationally available through a variety of learning methods. However there are a range of difficulties which beset such an apparently easy and obvious solution.

1 The network implies that agencies, public and voluntary, will be able to devote resources human, financial and material to the network at a time when most are hard-pressed, exist in a competitive climate and have vested interests.

2 Each partner has different expectations, has different ways of handling data (brochures, books, computers). There is no National Standard of Information. Much information is of an ephemeral nature. Key issues are the nature of information, how it is handled and why.

3 There may be little consensus between such a wide range of partners. There are residual difficulties for example in coordination between District and Regional Authorities affecting community education, F.E., libraries, school-library services, community schools, A.B.E. etc.

4 The network(s) may be competitive rather than cooperative. Is competition between educational institutions to the advantage of the adult learner? Can participation in education be treated simply as if it were equivalent to the consumption of a marketable commodity? Do approaches based on such assumptions represent 'value for money'?

5 Can the development of an effective network be left to the goodwill, chance appearance, and happen stance of dedicated volunteers in combination with professionals who may or may not be able or willing to devote the necessary time to the creation of the network? If 'guidance' is accepted as an essential element in creating responsive and effective eductional programmes for adults, it cannot be left to chance. This implies the allocation of appropriate levels of financial support. The experience in England, Wales and N. Ireland of short-term and insecure funding for guidance networks confirms the value of sustained, rational and long-term planning and funding.

6 While it is clear that local 'guidance' points and units of various kinds are vital, one view is that Scotland with its population size, relatively small number of public and voluntary educational agencies and education authorities could be well and efficiently served by a single national coordinating body and guidance system. Cooperation on which an effective guidance network is dependent, relies in a competitive climate, on power and a central as well as local political will to achieve

cooperation. The commitment of the Scottish Office would then be significant. Some may take the view, however, that this would lead to unnecessarily bureaucratic, centralised and professional structures mitigating against the effective articulation and advocacy of learners' interests and purposes.

7 There are difficulties in demarcation between clearly educational concerns and relationships with social issues and concerns. These raise questions in terms of priorities and the allocation of 'guidance' services to particular groups and/or to particular issues. Do or should 'guidance' services respond to 'everything' equally?

8 To provide information does not of itself create effective access. To say that a programme is open is insufficient unless monetary, geographic and social considerations are taken into account. There are prevailing and unquestioned myths about the open-ness of Open Learning. There are major differences, for example, on fee relief, costs, grants, between the regions, particularly for the unemployed, the retired and those on low wages.

Local Structures

1 Local guidance points are essential but up-dating of information is notoriously difficult.

2 Guidance other than information is increasingly costly especially when set against under-funded and often short-life agencies.

3 Locating coordination at Regional Government level is no guarantee of independence and the safeguarding of learners' interest. There appears however to be an important role for steering and coordinating committees at Regional level to stimulate and jointly fund innovatory programmes systematic outreach, training and monitoring of the results of 'guidance'.

Organisation and Resource

There seems to be great faith in the power of new technology to handle the complexity of information required to service such a guidance system. Perhaps in the light of current experience it would be unwise to be over optimistic about the capacity of Information Technology to overcome all the problems involved -

the ephemeral nature of much information - the lack of any standardisation in the way information is stored - the user friendliness of the system - the intelligibility and adequacy of stored information. In short, there may remain many major problems in that area alone to be resolved. Issues such as the compatibility of existing hardware and software clearly precede the resolutions of staff training in this area - though on the guidance side much might be learned from the developed guidance and counselling materials, training and services of Adult Basic Education.

Initial Issues for Considerations in Policy

1 If it is agreed that a national unit is required

(a) What should be its functions in relation to direct guidance work with members of the public, training, coordination, evaluation and research? Proper evaluation and follow-up of guidance seems to us to be essential. It is not in place at present.

(b) What power would it actually exercise particularly in relation to the regions and local guidance units? It may be that informal collaboration based on self-interest and consensus would not be sufficient. How are these difficulties to be handled?

(c) What type of information base should it develop and how much personal service and guidance would it provide to enquirers?

(d) Should it be based on an existing unit or should a new one be created with people who have experience and expertise in the field? What levels of staffing should it have?

(e) How may independence be achieved?

2 If it is agreed that local units are required, and bearing in mind the importance of independence in relation to the safeguarding and primacy of the interests of individual and group clients:-

(a) Where should local units be based and what power should they exercise? How far is a collaborative network based on self-interest sufficient? How are inependence and advocacy of client's interests to be safeguarded? Collaboration is difficult but the alternatives may ignore what provision already exists in the field.

(b) What are its functions in relation to those of the national unit? What are its local functions?

(c) Should local units vary in relation to existing patterns of provision or should an attempt be made to create uniform structures capable of taking into account variations in local conditions?

(d) What types of information base should local units and networks develop and how can problems of duplication and the handling of ephemeral data be tackled? For example what type of information base should local contact points develop? We have to bear in mind that inaccurate or less than comprehensive information may constitute bad advice.

(e) Bearing in mind the significance of personal guidance in relation to information, what staffing levels are necessary?

3 There is a major financial problem in terms of availability of central and local government resources. But guidance must not be a 'shoe-string' or short-term money operation.

4 An information base model alone may be attractive in financial terms but would tend only to repackage present curricula and learning programmes. Guidance in its wider sense is essential for the interests of learners, potential learners and curriculum development.

5 Is there an inevitable and necessary development of a professional career structure for guidance workers? Given a wider interpretation of guidance than the development of an information base, the core of a profession would develop from advice and counselling areas rather than information technology although expertise in the latter would be essential.

6 The key policy question for us is that, given scarce financial and human resources for education, how much expenditure do you wish to see on the development of a tier of workers who do not directly teach and may not themselves have a developed disciplinary base from which they can contribute to curriculum development. The guidance argument against this is that it reduces inefficiency and does contribute to curriculum development. But for this argument to be effective, there is no doubt that significant resources must be allocated to guidance work. A half-hearted or piece-meal approach would be inefficient and uneconomic. The key question remains.

7 Evaluation of guidance is essential. At present the expertise and resources may not be present.

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CHAPTER 2 DEVELOPMENTS, INNOVATIONS AND ISSUES IN GUIDANCE IN RENFREW

Strathclyde Policy and Management Structure

Since the publication in May 1981 of the Strathclyde Region discussion paper 'A Strategy for Post -Compusory Education and Training' (1), the report of a joint councillors/officers group, and the publication in January 1983 of '16+ Action Plan in Scotland (2), major developments have taken place in the post-compulsory education management structure in an attempt to develop an integrated and coherent system of post-compulsory education based on local geographic areas in the Region.

The philosophies and aims of the two reports were perceived to be of similar or at least of complementary intent so that Strathclyde was in a position when the Action Plan was published to respond rapidly. Local geographic areas are seen as planning bases for the provision of integrated and rationalised networks of provision by local consortia of secondary schools, F.E. colleges, community education and the careers service capable of providing access to learning opportunities for adults as well as younger people. Programmes are to take into account full-time and part-time study, both vocational and non-vocational education and the planning and management structures are based on concepts of lifelong and continuing education.

The Region's Education Committee has established a Regional Steering Group on Post-Compulsory Education to develop policy guidelines. Each Division has a Coordinating group to implement policy, develop the strategy for a full range of post-16 educational opportunities and the efficient coordination of the work of the Area Curriculum Planning Groups and local consortia of schools and colleges. It deals with modular provision, timetables, curriculum plans, transport arrangements, communication, publicity, attendance and guidance. Its members are education officers, the Principal Careers Officer, the Principal Community Education Officer, F.E. College Principals, Secondary Adviser (guidance), Divisional Timetabler, Divisional Coordinator (secretary). It is chaired by the Divisional Education Officer.

Local Area Curriculum Planning Groups have been established based on geography and the distribution of population and educational institutions. They consist of regional councillors (chairpersons), head teachers of secondary schools, F.E. College principals, area careers officers, area community education officers and divisional directorate representatives. These A.C.P.G.s have the functions of planning, 'needs' identification,

guidance, marketing and publicity, monitoring and evaluation and have the direct task of implementing an integrated, local post-compulsory education programme. Working or sub-groups of the A.C.P.G.s have been established in the areas of Curriculum, Guidance and Marketing and Publicity.

Guidance

The A.C.P.G. Guidance Coordinating Groups membership in Renfrew Division consists of the Schools' 16-18 Coordinators, the Area Community Education Officer, the Area Careers Officer, an F.E. College Representative and the Secondary Adviser (Guidance). Its functions are stated as follows:

To execute the decision of the A.C.P.G.

To establish points of contact in institutions and in the community.

To plan pre-induction programme for S4.

To monitor induction arrangements.

To ensure that all curricular, administrative and counselling information is available to students.

To decide on nature and means of transfer of information on students travelling between institutions.

To discuss case studies as appropriate.

To assist head teachers with the drawing up of compatible calendars of events.

To report to the A.C.P.G.

The essential role of guidance in the programme has been recognised from the start in Strathclyde as has the importance of access to the programme for adults above the age of 18. The Strategy for Post-Compulsory Education was clear that one of the main problems that individuals face is finding out what courses are actually available and points to the complexities of post-school education and training and the lack of readily available information and advice. These difficulties can destroy motivation to pursue learning programmes and "it is the view of the Group that the Authority should proceed as rapidly as possible to the development of an education, information, advisory and counselling system for adults servicing the whole of the region based on the structure of the existing careers service" (3). The Report is also clear that equal priority should be given to adult basic education and other forms of

continuing post-compulsory education as to initial and higher education. Further Education, Community Education and the Careers service were to be centrally involved in networks of post-compulsory education and 'consideration should be given to their integration both philosophically and functionally' (4).

It is from these bases and Action Plan developments that the A.C.P.G.s and their sub-groups on guidance have emerged. Colleges and schools have guidance functions but careers and community education were to play essential roles in guidance, outreach work, brokerage between providing institutions and advocacy. The careers service would provide the necessary links with industry and the MSC and community education would provide links with members of the wider community and traditional non-participants. Information centres and locally based supportive guidance services were seen as essential.

The Report rightly points out that staff in the various services would have to "give up their sovereigtny to the network policy" of provision and guidance (5).

In October 1984 a Strathclyde Regional Study Group produced a Report (6) and its recommendations, referring to the complexity of provision and locations, led to the setting up by A.C.P.G.s of Guidance Sub-Groups in order to achieve greater integration of guidance services amongst 'cooperating' agencies.

The Careers Service once more is seen as having an essential brokerage and coordination role in guidance and in the development of information bases together with educational resources librarians. In the light of what it sees as the essential roles of the careers services in personal and curricular guidance, information bases, policy-making and coordination, and involvement in college and school boards, the Group considered that both the training and manpower needs in the careers service would be reviewed. The Community Education service is seen as having important functions in publicising programmes in the local consortia through posters, booklets and personal contact. This work is seen as particularly important for young people and adults who have no formal contacts with school or further education. The Community Education service also has important work to do in the area of group and individual counselling which can increase and sustain motivation with traditional non-participants. Such work might also involve arranging learning with Adult Basic Education staff. The Report recommends that the contribution of community education continues to be a matter for discussion in the A.C.P.G.s and within the service itself.

The picture that emerges then in Strathclyde is a formal policy and management structure for the development of integrated post-compulsory education with guidance seen as an essential part of a complex educational programme. The careers services are seen to

have major roles to play. Policy based solely on the concept of self-referral by adult students is seen as insufficient and it is here that community and adult basic educators have vital tasks in uncovering latent and unexpressed demand. It is recognised that more in-service training and resources for guidance are required.

Renfrew Community Education and Library Services

How are these policy commitments and structures working in Renfrew? Of concern to us in the study is the potential and contribution that library services may make to guidance. As Renfrew District Library Services have a progressive and innovative reputation in work with members of the various communities it was decided to investigate developments in this area of Strathclyde.

A Divisional Coordinating group has been established with 10 A.C.P.G.s and Guidance Coordination Groups in 3 F.E. college areas. The Division has responded to recommendations made by the 1984 Regional Study Group on guidance. In the area of in-service training, programmes in guidance have been impeded by industrial action; there are named persons in each school and college to administer links between institutions and to act as a main or first line guidance staff member for students; the development of computerised information cases is being considered; it is hoped to establish local counselling groups, and it is anticipated that community education officers will play an increasingly important role as marketing (sic) of the Action Plan gets underway.

Insight into policy issues and the effectiveness of the guidance programme has been obtained from open-ended interviews and discussions with a senior C.E. worker in Renfrew, A.B.E. workers, a regional staff-member and with members of the Renfrewshire Library Service. Visits were made to Ferguslie Park Library, Johnstone Information and Leisure Library and the Linwood Information Centre which provided reaction to the effectiveness of guidance and perceptions at the local level. Wha follows cannot be described as the result of comprehensive survey and analysis but may be regarded as significant views on the nature of developments in guidance from concerned and informed individuals on what they consider to be the important issues. They are summarised records of interviews and observation designed to convey as accurately as possible the views and issues raised. As there have been significant developments in the ways in which library services see their functions and as we wish to discover areas of good practice in guidance, some emphasis is given to the nature of District Library services in Renfrew and their links with educational developments.

Senior C.E. Worker

It is felt that, while structures for guidance are in place for a coherent developmental post-compulsory education, the A.C.P.G.s and Guidance Sub-Groups are a long way from developing effective and direct networks of local guidance. They are in their early stages of development. Schools and Colleges do have guidance staff but they are almost all part-time guidance workers and not effective in outreach or pre-course guidance. Community education workers should have responsibility for pre-course guidance because of their outreach work and contact and they do in fact make a significant number of referrals to courses at present. While it is true that Secondary School teachers, Community Education workers, F.E/ staff and Careers Officers are all involved in structures to advise on guidance or in actual guidance work, most of them require joint in-service training.

There is a difficulty of vested and competing interest operating in guidance. For example, schools wish to keep up the numbers on their rolls as do the Colleges.

The Division has set up a Working Group on Guidance which has had three meetings (March 1986) and it is looking at the possibility of establishing independent guidance Units in each area as a local basis for information, advice and counselling. But there is a staffing problem for such units. "It's clear that in terms of staff, Careers can't cope. They don't have the manpower resources. F.E. college and school staff and others involved are all part-time and Community Education has the usual role of attempting everything all at the same time." There is therefore a need for full-time trained staff for independent local units to operate properly.

Libraries are not included in any of the structures despite innovative developments in Renfrew. The W.E.A. and University Extra-Mutal Departments are not represented directly but through Community Education which funds them and it is Community Education which should provide an effective outreach policy.

What is required is an independent properly funded local guidance unit having information and links with regional and national guidance networks.

At present, while the A.C.P.G.s are not just looking at the 16-18 group, there is no doubt that its work is dominated by the school sector and that "we continually have to remind the A.C.P.G.s that the post-16 programme and the post-compulsory strategy is very much wider." There are problems of coordination, vested

interests, competition for control and concern as to who will get the credit for guidance programmes.

Senior Regional Official

The interview confirms that the A.C.P.G.s and Guidance Groups stemmed from the Post-Compulsory Education Strategy and the 16+ programme. The view is that the A.C.P.G.s over the last 18 months have concentrated on schools and opportunities for adults in schools. A.C.P.G.s tend to have a 'schools menu' partly motivated by falling school rolls.

In relation to adult education programmes and guidance, it is considered that I.F.E. and Adult Education Associations operate effectively in 'middle-class areas' on a self-financing basis. A.B.E. has only 8 full-timers in Strathclyde but a large budget for part-time workers and is free. But a much larger number of specialist adult educators is required if policy on guidance is to be effectively implemented as many C.E. and Careers workers lack appropriate approaches to working in guidance with adults. It remains the case that many C.E. workers do not see adult education as a part of their remit. Given this situation, policy on guidance for adult learning opportunities is largely ineffective.

The policy is that adult members of the public should become aware of adult learning opportunities through the A.C.P.G.s and that Area Community Education officers should play an effective liaison and brokerage role in developing a coordinated network of advice. But school-based work still appears to dominate and the C.E.O.s don't appear to be working effectively for adults on the A.C.P.G.s. Area Careers officers, it is said, come into the adult guidance scene by default in the sense that there are insufficient adult educators on the ground. Many careers staff don't have sufficient background in problems on adult learning or in wider concepts of adult education and tend to 'shovel people in Colleges'. They do however genuinely see adult guidance as a part of their work and wish to take it on.

It would seem logical for Careers to take on responsibility for more formal advice and information particularly on the more vocational programmes, for Community Education to take on outreach work with traditional non-participants and for A.B.E. to be more fully developed as part of a coherent and developmental educational and guidance programme. But at present there is insufficient allocation of finance to guidance and full-time adult education staff. There are large gaps in provision of guidance to be filled. F.E. staff are not effective in providing pre-course guidance. Open Learning programmes do not reach the 'disadvantaged' District Library Services are not bound into

guidance structures. Gaps will not be filled unless sustained financing and staffing are provided to make guidance networks effective.

In terms of collaborative national and local networks, it is thought that the £6,500 paid by the Region to Network is value for money. Network is considered to have appropriate experience and effective approaches to providing guidance for adults. It is seen to be independent and has good contact with relevant agencies. It also has the capacity to develop a computer-based information system but Network would need a major injection of funds to achieve this as well as in the development of a personal advice and counselling programme. As regards local units, it is thought that two/three staff should be employed in each division to establish such units which could link in with Network. Network, with appropriate staffing, could develop an effective training function for local guidance staff.

It is not considered that the T.A.P.s project will be effective in reaching people in multi-deprived areas. Human interpretation and advice is required to go together with computer-based programmes if they are to be effective.

An A.B.E. worker

Full and part-time A.B.E. staff do have experience and skills in guidance work with adults in a wide range of adult learning opportunities. Counselling and advice is provided through individual interviews. The programme has expanded from the more traditional literacy and numeracy work into use of O.U. Community Education material, women's issues, health, welfare rights, keep-fit, pre-O-grade work, cookery and life and social skills. More full-time outreach workers are required.

Participants do move into the local F.E. college from the programme and good relations with the college have been established. But it is considered that F.E. should develop better pre-course outreach work and more appropriate curricula.

A.C.P.G.s are involved in working out timetables for schools and colleges, transport for students between education centres and include work on adults in classes in schools. But I.F.E. and A.B.E. are not much discussed.

"There is an amazing range of people who require information, advice and counselling and provision at present is a labyrinth." A.C.P.G.s could form the focus and bases of local guidance but extra funds for staff would be needed to develop an independent

and effective local guidance unit for adults. If no permanent funding is provided, conflict may well develop between the various agencies on the A.C.P.G.s.

Outreach work can not be effectively carried by present F.E. and schools. Information alone in such work is not sufficient and personal advice is required.

A national agency is considered an essential part of a guidance network in order to ensure that possibility of progression. Network might do the job and has relevant expertise and approaches in working with adults.

'Improved Access to Learning Project'

In 1982 Renfrew Division, following Strathclyde's policy of establishing community-based adult education in areas of multi-deptivation, initiated the Improved Access to Learning Project and employed five project organiser/tutors on a part-time basis of 30 hours (now 29 hours) a week in Larkfield Greenock (2 organisers) Ferguslie Paisley (2 organisers) and Waulkmill Barrhead (1 organiser).

Their aim is to create educational opportunities for traditional non-participants including the unemployed, single-parent families, young mothers, the elderly, women's group and emphasis is placed on the physically and mentally handicapped.

The workers whilst responsible to the Community Education Area Officer are based in Areas of Priority Treatment and the project is monitored by the Specialist Organiser of Adult Basic Education, Renfrew Division. They have client-based, humanistic and outreach approaches designed to enable the articulation of learning intentions and needs and to base learning programmes, activity and curricula on them. The role of the organisers is concerned with and varies continuously between identification of expressed and latent needs; defining aims and objectives;syllabus and curriculum development; planning; timetabling; publicising and social activities of various kinds related to educational purposes. The methodology is innovatory, developing networks of informal, student centred, participatory learning consistent with philosophies and policies of lifelong learning.

Individual counselling ensures that the needs and intentions of 'students' are foremost and creates more effective access both to informal and formal learning opportunities in the broad spectrum of adult education - Adults in School, F.E., Universities, Welfare Rights Programmes, informal and issue based discussion

groups, the WEA and community self-help groups. A notable number of successes are recorded at various levels and in both group and individual terms (7).

An interagency networking approach is adopted and effective working relationships have developed with the W.E.A., Social Work, Health Service, Age Concern, Network, SABEU, Schools, F.E., voluntary agencies and clergy. A client-based network of information, guidance and direct educational provision, has developed linked into a broad array of other educational opportunities.

The major problems identified are:

(a) dependence on other agencies for resources

(b) short-term budgeting creates insecurity for staff when what is required is continuity of development - especially in the interests of learners. Alienation is increased by projects which come and go and where expectations are raised only to be disappointed.

(c) part-time staff work more hours than they are paid for and extra paid hours are required.

Comment on the Improved Access Project

It is clear that we have the beginning of an effective programme and network of learning and guidance for traditional non-participants which is client-based and which has clear educational objectives. There is a collaborative inter-agency approach and high motivation, despite insecure funding, amongst the staff. The experience of the project demonstrates yet again what can be achieved by specialist and responsive adult educators with those previously dismissed as apathetic, cynical and/or incapable of learning when they are effectively introduced to a range of choice and opportunities linked with personal advice and direct local learning opportunities enabling both cognitive and social development and the creation of confidence.

This type of work forms an essential basis for guidance structure and philosophy.

Renfrewshire Library Services and Guidance

The Alexander Report in 1975, made the following comments and recommendation in relation to libraries which refer to their role in assisting adults gain access to educational opportunities.

"The public library service therefore already makes a significant contribution to the education of adults but it is capable of increasing its contribution if it is given adequate resources and becomes more closely associated with the education service. In their professional capacity many librarians tend to operate within the confines of their library. They must be encouraged to widen their professional interests and take an even greater part in helping to secure for adults a wider range of educational opportunities. In particular they must ensure that the resources of their libraries are used as extensively and intensively as possible. We think that most libraries are anxious to develop their service in this way, and we recommend that each library authority should appoint appropriate members of staff to maintain close liaison with those concerned with adult education in their area so that the full resources of the library service may be used in the interests of adult education".(8)

Changes in the structure of local government in which education has become a regional function and libraries a district function has not directly contributed to a closer association of library services with education, and in some districts the library services have become a part of more composite leisure and recreation services, and may have made for a more complex organisational and inter-professional situation.

There is, however, an increasing awareness in Scotland of the functions that library services could and do take on in the development of networks of guidance for adult learning opportunities and a number of librarians would welcome more active roles in this field. The potential of libraries is frequently underestimated despite their traditional work in providing access to learning, recreational reading, independent study and information. Libraries have well-developed professional and physical bases; well-qualified staff experienced in working with adults and dealing with enquiries; thay have expertise in finding out information, providing it and developing and managing information bases; they often have up-to-date knowledge of information technology; they frequently have well-developed links with educational and other local agencies; and they are perceived by many adults to be independent, non-threatening, accessible agencies to which they can turn for information and assistance with study as well as other queries.

They frequently have experience in and knowledge of informal and non-formal learning opportunities for adults in which the Careers Service and F.E. Colleges, for example, may be lacking and they have much experience in making available local, and perhaps ephemeral, information from a wide variety of groups. In the

light of this experience, knowledge and professional commitment, the long history of libraries in public education and their concern to provide information and learning to those adults who have not gained access to study through more formal educational programmes, their potential as part of a coordinated guidance network is high.

Commitment to various aspects of guidance functions in Scotland, as one would expect, differs from area to area. But surveys carried out by HMI Arthur Maltby in 1983 and 1985; the formation of a Library Education Group consisting of the Scottish Library Association; the Scottish Institute of Adult and Continuing Education; The Scottish Community Education Council; Network Scotland Ltd. and a member of the inspectorate; the publication of 'Lights in the Darkness - Scottish Libraries and Adult Education' by the S.I.A.C.E. in 1985 (9); the development of joint work with Network in the establishment of information and access points; and developments in the use of Prestel, Teletext and microcomputers, are all indications of the serious intent of libraries in this field of work.

The intention of this section is to see how far, in what is generally recognised to be a progressive and innovative library service in Renfrewshire, the concerns expressed for libraries to play a more effective part in guidance are being put into practice.

Renfrew District has a population of 213,000, is the third largest district in Scotland and includes Paisley, Johnstone, Renfrew and Parkhead, the new communities of Erskine, Linwood and a number of villages. It is a mixed urban and rural area. Economic deprivation and unemployment are at high levels. It is estimated for example that in Paisley there is 23% male unemployment, 40% in Linwood and in Johnstone 80% youth unemployment.

The Chief Officer of the Libraries service is on the same level as other chief officers or Directors in a corporate management structure and reports direct to the Arts and Community Committee. Libraries then in Renfrew do not form part of a composite Leisure and Recreation Department.

Renfrew Libraries form a high profile service committed to providing information and knowledge to the wider community and which positively discriminates in favour of the unemployed and the poor. The polemic 'Public Libraries versus the Electric Soup' ** by Joe Hendry (10), the Chief Librarian in Renfrew, should be read widely.

** Electric Soup is a mixture of Brasso and 'Irn-Bru' - you can have a party for less than a £1.

Stated views underlying policy are, for example, that: "If ever there was a time when we need a coherent long-term strategy for education throughout our lives it is now."

Libraries should provide services to people which maintain and develop their ability to think, reason, to question and to find out." Libraries should be "at the centre of a whole lifelong education movement."

The view is taken that people "have the gift of reason and that this is the most precious, fragile and powerful of human gifts" and that we have to "restore libraries to the people".

To these ends and to the purpose of providing information, facts, knowledge and ideas that people 'want and need' the library services are establishing what are termed 'community' libraries. There is a strong and charismatic leadership, a concerned and committed staff and a stated participatory style of management. Staff are encouraged to know their own 'patch', to develop work based on this knowledge and to develop their own projects and programmes. It is considered that all staff should respond as best they can to the provision of general information and advice. The finer distinctions made between the two are not highly regarded. An underlying principle is that of allowing people to think for themselves. To this end local history groups, courses and societies are encouraged. Books and information are provided to enrich political debate. Interest, issue and press-cuttings files have been developed for district councillors with the intention of creating a well-informed background for decision-making and these files, it is said, are well-used by councillors. There is also a 'writer in residence' at the Central Library in Paisley.

Contact is maintained and developed with councillors, Trade Unions, the W.E.A., Community Education, Social Work, Unemployed Workers' Centres and Groups, MSC Job Centres and Careers. Free phone-links are provided between libraries and Job Centres. The policy is to provide in each library information on jobs and careers, welfare services and on educational opportunities. The officially stated aims and objectives are to promote the spread of knowledge, information, education and culture, by stimulating intellectual, artistic and imaginative activity and encouraging and fostering leisure interests. Secondly, to act as a counterbalance to the excesses of other forms of mass media by representing in library book stocks all shades of moral, religious and political opinion. By making the resources of the library free to all sections of the community and ensuring maximum individual choice for members of the community. Thirdly,

to act as a collective memory by storing ideas, information and the imaginative creations of mankind. Fourthly, acting as the custodian of all materials such as books, pamphlets, newspapers, archives and photographs relating to the history and contemporary life of the community which the libraries serve.

The recommendations of the Alexander Report are officially recognised in the policy programme areas of the services - "Informal Education - to provide, through books and other library materials a wide range of educational opportunities which will permit the libraries service to make a significant contribution to the education of adults" (11).

It is claimed the Renfrew District has the highest proportion of registered readers in Scotland but it is recognised that the nature of the reading is not 'qualitatively' measured. Seven new libraries have opened in the last eight years. There are 131 full-time members, 53 part-time, 3 full-time manual workers and 24 part-time manual workers. Service points are: Central Library (Paisley): 9 full-time libraries (54 hours per week); 10 part-time libraries (22-32 hours per week); 6 library centres; 2 mobile libraries serving rural areas and deprived urban areas; library headquarters (at Marchfield Avenue); a teenage library in Johnstone; Linfo, an information centre; a library centre/school library and the Local Government Library in the Municipal Buildings (12).

The post of Community Services Librarian was established as a part of the 1976 literacy campaign. A collection of literacy and A.B.E. materials has been developed at HQ, as have good relations with literacy and A.B.E. tutors. The collection has been expanded into welfare rights and benefits, housing, rents and social welfare information and what is termed community information in its broadest sense. Senior staff are clear that once information is gathered, it is not on its own sufficient and that interpretation and advice must be provided if information bases are to be effective. Of the information held, 70% is related to 'money matters' and people's pressing problems' rather than an overall emphasis on educational opportunities. The developments in community library services in Ferguslie Park, JILL, LINFO and unemployed worker's centres represent the attempt to turn basic or traditional library services round to better serve the local population and the policy is to seek out or attract people who find it difficult to obtain and use information.

A.B.E. materials, including English as a Second Language, are in stock and good well organised relations are maintained with A.B.E.staff and more informally with the Careers Service. A large range of prospectuses, the Open Learning Directory and Open Learning materials are maintained, although these are not on

permanent display in the libraries. There are however prominent units in the libraries which have careers information and related educational opportunities. It is considered desirable to develop a computer-based information system on adult learning opportunities but it does not exist at present. A list of clubs and societies is on disc at HQ but most machines in libraries are used for word processing and recreational purposes and are not linked in to adult learning information. There is no specific policy on guidance for adult learning opportunities.

It is felt that the A.C.P.G.s have not yet created a collaborative structure of information and advice for adults at grassroots level and libraries are not represented on these groups. It is considered that at present then no recognisable structured network of guidance exists and that much remains to be done. The libraries, given human and financial resources and cooperation, would consider the development of an educational guidance pilot-project on a shop-front model perhaps in the middle of Paisley. An informal umbrella or network groups of agencies could provide information but it is recognised that there is a problem of rivalry and coordination between agencies and that the question of who would control such a project is a difficult one. It is considered then that such a pilot-project may be too high a goal at present and libraries are going ahead with a series of one-week adult education information events in July, August and September 1986 inviting staff from Careers, Community Education, the Colleges, the Open University, W.E.A. and other agencies.

Libraries could be developed as guidance points but it is emphasised that this would have staffing implications in that information would require interpretation and advice.

In a significant experiment which demonstrates the commitment of senior staff to educational guidance, an attempt was made to develop a computerised information base on adult learning opportunities in a relatively small area of Linwood. The project involved the head of computer studies at a College of Technology. The attempt was made to collect up to date information on courses, centres, times, duration, fees, named contact persons, subjects, grades, and entrance qualifications. They found they had not the staff or resources to carry out on a sustained basis what turned out to be the most difficult part of the project - finding up to date information. There was much ephemeral information which couldn't be handled and much information on courses was out of date or inaccurate. The project was abandoned as it was taking up so much staff time.

It is considered that in terms of a national guidance unit, NETWORK has much appropriate experience and has important roles to play including that of training.

Policy priority is given to deprived urban areas and this priority is made clear by the allocation or resources to create the Community Library in Ferguslie Park, the Linwood Information Centre and JILL the Youth Library in Johnstone.]

Profile of Ferguslie Park Community Library

This profile is based on two visits of observation, open-ended interviews with five members of staff and background documents and papers including Alan Hasson's 'Hocus Pocus: Community Information in Ferguslie' (13) and the library's publication 'Information for Ferguslie 1986'.

Ferguslie is one of the most deprived areas in Western Europe. It is estimated that over 90% of 16-18 year olds have no permanent job, 55% of males and 47% of females, are unemployed. Almost 100% of housing in Ferguslie Park is public, one-third of the tenants are said to be on housing benefit and there is a problem of overcrowding. The Library opened in spring 1983 and is in the shopping centre. There are three professional librarians, including one young person's librarian and a community information librarian. Usually for a library of this size there would be only one professional librarian. There are two youth workers employed by the library, two non-professional librarians, two part-time librarians and six women volunteers working with youth groups. The library is open from 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. four days a week and 10.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. two days a week and sometimes longer when groups meet in the evening. Apart from the main library space, there is an activities room, two smaller rooms and a staff room. There are no charges or fines. Books are on open display with easy categories and symbols. Cassettes are available for borrowing. The shop-type of atmosphere was planned and it is friendly and inviting.

Community information is said to be required by the public, or those acting on their behalf, to make effective use of the resources potentially available to them in the communities in which they live. Renfrew has a strong commitment to providing information to lower socio-economic groups on housing, employment, family affairs, consumer rights, education and civil and welfare rights. Publicity on formal education courses was provided after the opening in spring 1983 but it was found that this information was little used and is no longer given major prominence or priority. Information and publicity are largely based on very local leisure and cultural activities as wider information has been largely ignored. There has been an expansion of provision of information in such areas as housing, heating and lighting in response to public requests. There is a 'Whats on' local events poster board and poster and display space

is available to other groups. There are leaflets in boxes in 14 categories covering housing, consumer rights, DHHS materials, education, Women's Rights, domestic violence and a careers collection. The library hosts other agencies and groups wishing to increase awareness and they work to establish the library as part of a process by which people can discover the information they need and provide information where there has been little cultural tradition of book usage. The library wishes to fill information gaps left by other agencies. Community Groups use the library's clerical facilities and skills. There are computers in the library but these are used largely for recreational purposes and are not ties into access to Learning opportunities programmes.

The library cooperates with other groups including the Ferguslie League of Action Groups which has its own premises and full-time staff, an information shop providing practical help for people with problems and for tenants' associations, social workers, women's groups, C.E. workers, careers officers and health workers. The W.E.A. did in fact develop a local history group based at the library and A.B.E. and Careers workers regularly use library facilities.

A major development in 'community information' has been a large 50 page booklet produced by the library entitled 'Information for Ferguslie'. Two thousand five hundred are produced every four months and delivered to all households, clubs and organisations in the area and represents the library's effort to provide in one booklet information on the various types of resources, including education, that are available. Both Careers and Community Education names, addresses and telephone numbers appear in the booklet.

Librarian and youth workers in Ferguslie have particular concerns to develop efficient information services and activities for young people. Youth Action Groups and Girls Action Groups have developed and Youth Cafe is shortly to be opened next door to the library with Urban Aid funding. The work of the 13-16 years Girls' Action Group is remarkable and the commitment of the workers clear. The library itself provides educational help for schoolchildren after school hours with home work and in social education, arts and crafts. Six play schemes were run from the library last summer.

Staff deal with any request for information from housing issues to visa applications. They will provide information as far as they can on any request and refer people elsewhere for more. They talk to members of the public easily and well and will if necessary take up a rent or housing issue on behalf of a member of the public with the local authority.

In relation to education for young people and adults little contact or understanding has been developed with Community Education workers and library staff are not sure of their functions. Their view is that C.E. workers have a high staff turnover and seem to spend a great deal of time on administration and meetings rather than on direct contact with members of the public.

Very little organised direct educational work takes place with young people. The view of the youth workers is that the vast majority is not interested in obtaining formal qualifications as they don't think these will lead to a job. They feel that they will not get work and that they are stigmatised. The Ferguslie Park address, they feel, finishes them off with employers and the F.E. College.

It is felt that the colleges are slow to change their approach in working more flexibly with young people and adults and that both F.E. and C.E. workers tend to provide passive information without interpretation. There is little contact with adult educators from the University and the W.E.A. but some adult basic educators have worked well with the Library. Over the last three years only one or two people have been asked for O.U. material. It is felt that most local young people don't want to join the 16+ programme and don't want to go to college. The library staff felt that most MSC Community Programmes had little educational or training content.

Comment

Library staff clearly have appropriate values, commitment and some of the knowledge and skills to work effectively in guidance in Ferguslie. They relate well to the local people and the ethos and atmosphere of the library is conducive to effective guidance work with traditional non-participants in educational programmes. The staff are willing to cooperate in developing a network of information and advice on education. But there is little contact with educational agencies such as C.E., W.E.A. University, I.F.E. and F.E. They do have contact and get on well with A.B.E. workers and Careers Officers. Careers Officers are spoken of approvingly but it is remarked that the Careers service lack sufficient personnel and resources, as does A.B.E. The evidence suggests that the 16+ programme in Colleges is not effectively accessible to many in Ferguslie Park. In these circumstances it is not surprising that libraries in Renfrew tend to get on with their own programme and are not yet part of an effective network of guidance. Educational agencies do not appear to take much advantage of the contacts and services offered.

JILL

The Johnstone Information and Leisure Library was opened in 1984. Joe Hendry's account of the background is to be found in 'Jill's Pure Brill' (Renfrew District Library Services). Unemployment amongst young people in Johnstone is estimated to be about 80%. MSC schemes are not highly regarded, truancy is rife in secondary schools as is suspension for misdemeanours. There are varying degrees of despair, apathy and cynicism amongst young people who want a real job. A survey in 1981 showed the proportion of teenagers using libraries to be falling and that the trend was particularly noticeable in 'non-academic' groups of secondary pupils (14). Teenage collections in conventional libraries had marginal effects on teenagers and sometimes alienated older readers disturbed by the noise and energy of the teenagers.

Hendry's account of the library may be summarised as follows: JILL began in a former school building occupied by an MSC funded workshop. The top floor of the building was vacant and Urban Aid money was used to develop an experimental teenage library and it opened in 1984 in the former classroom. There were no previous examples of such a teenage library to be found in Britain from which to learn, but clearly a particular atmosphere and style were required. It was important to provide a library service for teenagers on their terms and based on their interests and outlook. There is music, noise, paperbacks, board games, microcomputers, posters and tapes.

It was an immediate success and word of mouth communication meant that in the first month JILL registered almost 1,000 teenagers and issue nearly 3,000 items of which 75% was audio-visual material. By the summer of 1984, registered readers had topped 4,000 and there were regularly 60 to 80 young people forming a mass of noisy humanity in a small classroom. It was necessary to find better accommodation and JILL moved to the present accommodation which was in fact Renfrew County's first purpose-built library when it opened in 1985. Warm, soft colours are used in decoration and a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere has developed. There are separate work rooms, staff rooms, staff area, a partitioned area for playing musical instruments, an audio-visual area and security cameras to inhibit glue sniffing. There is a break-dance club, careers advice, welfare rights clinics, creative writing class, computer club, and the staff have organised trips for members. The Library in October 1985 had registered readership of 6,000 with issues of 5,000 items per month and it has become a focus for teenagers.

'It's a place to go and it's theirs'. Teenagers want a place of their own and it has to be administered on a very flexible basis. Staff have to be tolerant. However anybody can use it and anyone can register and get the usual library services. The need for other such teenage libraries is such that there is a strong

demand for them in the district's other burghs.

Our observations and interviews show the following. The Library is open five days a week, not on Saturdays and Sundays, and on only two evenings a week. Young people do use the library as a meeting place and as a place to obtain information. It is largely used by 16-19 year old unemployed people and some school pupils. Main information objectives involve benefits, housing jobs and education. But staff think it is rare for people to use information to take a course. In fact one member of staff could only remember one instance over the last few months (a young woman taking a place on a hairdressing course) of a person taking a course as a result of information given, though this may be due to lack of monitoring the effects of information provided.

JILL does have educational courses brochures; the Open Learning Directory; college prospectuses; information on YTS and careers and MSC programme information. There is a section of A.B.E. materials, though these are not much used. The Library has two BBC computers but these are not linked into, for example MARIS or ECCTIS. There are two discs on Careers but nothing systematic on learning opportunities. They have basic maths and basic literacy programmes on disc but most materials are computer games. There is, however, through the computer club, means of becoming computer literate.

It is felt that more staff are required if the library is to fulfil educational advice and interpretation work. Staff were extremely busy keeping the library going. No real push for coordination or for a network of information and advice has been perceived by library staff. There has been little constructive contact with C.E. although they do have good relations with Careers staff. There was little knowledge of the purposes and roles of NETWORK.

Comment

JILL is clearly successful as a specialist teenage library but the potentialities of developing the library service as a guidance point for learning opportunities is not well developed. Cooperation with other agencies in this respect is marginal and computer facilities are largely used for recreational purposes. Educational information is present in the library but does not appear to be very well used.

LINFO

The Linwood Information Centre opened in August 1981 three months after the closure of the Talbot car factory, leaving 7,000 people redundant. The local unemployment rate is 40%. LINFO operates from a shop unit situated in a regional shopping centre which has nearly as many empty as rented units. It is run by the Library Service and has Urban Aid funding. There are five full-time members of staff with clerical back-up and it is open 54 hours a week including evenings and Saturdays. The full-time staff are the Coordinator, two Information Officers and two Information Assistants. By 1984-5 they were dealing with 15,457 callers a year and full reports are available from Renfrew Library Services.

It is a one-door entry shop-front information centre dealing with people's pressing problems which are largely money related. People can get information and advice without being pushed around in a circle. Major issues are unemployment, housing, tax and social security problems. Staff take on advice and advocacy functions and guide people through complex legislation and bureaucracy. There are interview rooms, a small lecture room and there are regular group and individual counselling sessions on alcoholism, marriage guidance, legal aid and education. The education clinic is the least used and mostly deals with money related matters such as clothing grants, school meals and Parent's Charter related information and advice.

LINFO is then not specifically a centre for educational information and advice although it does have a good range of educational information, brochures and directories. Educational enquiries form a low proportion of the whole and these are frequently referred to NETWORK which is well regarded and seen as an effective source of educational information. A worker commented in relation to educational information that NETWORK is able to tell me everything that is going on in Strathclyde. For example, 'it can tell me about any course on building radios if there is nothing locally. NETWORK finds out for me and rings back next day. They give me the time, the place, the fees that are charged etc. so I find NETWORK helpful.'

LINFO is pleasant, friendly and a comfortable place to be in. One is surrounded by information from Careers to Leisure and Recreation to educational opportunities. Teenagers and adults mix happily. Information, advice and advocacy is client centred and confidential but the atmosphere remains open. Staff respond immediately to problems through use of the telephone, speaking to appropriate officials and resources already in the centre. Staff try to anticipate demand - for example forthcoming legislation on statutory sick pay and forecast that fuel and heating problems will require more information and advice resources in future.

It is felt that educational information does not reach the street and that educational agencies should undertake more outreach work. It was also considered that the financial aspects were crucial in that people cannot take up educational opportunities even if they know about them as there are few grants to pay the fees. LINFO would be prepared to help if a local collaborative network of educational information and advice were established and positive views are held about a possible national unit and NETWORK's role in it.

Staff have a high degree of job satisfaction and it is considered that the value of having the same full-time members of staff practising information/advice work six days a week cannot be overestimated. There is little coordination in planning with other agencies, though the Coordinator does represent LINFO on Community Councils, tenant's groups, and publicises LINFO with other agencies. There is little contct with Community Education although enquiries about night classes are referred to them. Much more contact is had with social work which reflects the problems which people bring.

LINFO does not have the resources to conduct formal evaluation of its work but clients return and word of mouth publicity is effective.

Comment

LINFO is an excellent shop-front one-door entry agency dealing with people's pressing problems. It is a remarkable initiative reflecting the values and purposes of policy in the Renfrew Library Service. Educational information is available and NETWORK is used when requests come in which cannot be directly answered.

What LINFO provides is an extremely useful model for a local and independent educational guidance service. It is comfortable and has responsive approaches. Outreach work and publicity is carried out. It is centrally located. The five full-time members of staff and continuity are, we think, crucial factors in the effectiveness of the unit. They are committed; operate on a sustained basis; do not fear that they will be cut in the next six months; gain great satisfaction in dealing directly with members of the public; continuously build up their experience in information of senior Library staff. The physical and professional base is then secure. The work is client centred, confidential and independent of vested interest. Group work and counselling operate on the premises.

The LINFO experience then could be beneficially looked to for the creation of an independent educational guidance unit for adult learning. It has a fairly comprehensive array of information and its staff provide advice and counselling where appropriate and they take on advocacy and broker roles. Specialists are brought in as required and there is space, if limited, for group work.

If LINFO is an appropriate model for local guidance units, questions arise concerning which agency/agencies will be responsible for funding and how autonomy and independence in terms of the clients interests are to be secured.

Summary of developments in Renfrew and Implications for Guidance

There is a policy, a management structure and real effort being made in Strathclyde and Renfrew since the publication of the Post-Compulsory Education Strategy in 1981 and the 16+ programme in 1983 to develop a coherent, accessible and developmental structure of learning opportunities for young people and adults. It is agreed and officially stated that guidance is needed at local and national level if effective access is to be created to what remains a complex structure of provision in terms of numbers of courses and modules; the roles of F.E., A.B.E., C.E., the W.E.A. and other adult education agencies; locations; entry-levels; grades; timetables; progression; sequence; and grants. The Area Curriculum Planning Groups and their Guidance sub-groups are a good beginning in developing cooperation between key concerned agencies, including F.E., Careers, Schools and Community Education but:

a) There is a tendency to concentrate on younger people rather than mature adults.

b) Careers staff frequently wish to expand their role into work with adults and are well regarded by workers in other agencies but are short of manpower and need training and experience in educational guidance work with adults which would involve greater awareness of the relationships between vocational and more general educational development. There may be major official obstacles for them in developing an all-age service and ensuring that thay are a client oriented, rather that employer-led service. Staff are well aware that young people and adults have broader educational and social needs that those related purely to vocational considerations. Central policy questions concerning the Careers Service and its functions will have to be resolved before judgements can be made about its future work in a collaborative network of Adult Guidance for Learning. It is our view that the service should be allowed to develop an all-age service and that it should not be restricted to narrowly vocational advice which constrains the development of an adequate

general educational base. The logic of the 16+ programme which is intended to be accessible to people of all ages implies an all-age service.

c) Community education staff are represented on the A.C.P.G.s and should be involved in reaching adults in the community, particularly those who are traditional non-participants. There does appear to be some continuing uncertainty about their roles in relation to adult education and guidance and they have understandable difficulties in prioritising amongst a plethora of tasks. It is not sufficient for C.E. staff to be seen as mere 'post-boxes' for information and leaflets and they should be involved in active discussion and advice with individuals and groups.

d) A.B.E. staff who do have direct experience of guidance and educational work with adults are understaffed and not directly represented on the A.C.P.G.s. Their experience and commitment, including those working on the 'Improved Access to Learning Project' is of great value.

e) Schools and F.E. staff are involved in on-course guidance and there are named contact staff in each institution. But they are not as involved in out-reach work and pre-course guidance as they might be and are usually part-time guidance workers with other significant tasks to carry out.

f) Libraries in Renfrew are not bound into the official structure of guidance although they do have knowledge and experience which might be better utilised.

g) There are problems of vested interests, competition and potential disagreements on control in guidance work.

h) All workers require more training in guidance.

An effective network of guidance is not yet in place. All workers contacted agree that:

a) There should be locally based guidance units and contact points and that these should be linked to divisional and national units. These units could utilise the cooperative structures on curriculum and guidance which have been developed and the experience which exists in the concerned agencies.

b) The units should be properly funded on a sustained basis by

the region and central government, but with appropriate safeguards for its independence to ensure the primacy of the client's interests.

c) Unless there is sustained funding and appropriate levels of permanent full-time staff, an effective and collaborative network of guidance and training for staff cannot be developed.

d) Computerised information bases should be developed. But there are major difficulties in achieving an up to date and comprehensive information base which may take up disproportionate amounts of scarce resources and time, reducing the capacity to give personal advice and interpretation. There is therefore a degree of uncertainty and confusion on this question which perhaps requires a pilot research study and the utilisation of experience in 'NETWORK'.

e) There is unanimous emphasis from well-informed and experienced workers in all agencies on the view that information alone is insufficient and personal advice and guidance is essential.

f) Most workers who have had contact with NETWORK considered that it was most useful and that it had the potential to play an important part in the creation of a National Unit.

There are then financial implications in the development of an effective guidance network. It is felt that short-term money is not the appropriate basis and that the work cannot be done cheaply. However, there are long-term financial savings, educational and social benefits to be gained from an efficient network through the development of human resources and the creation of an efficient structure which may eliminate considerable wastage in educational effort and contribute to coherent programmes of learning.

In Renfrew it would seem appropriate to utilise the experience, local knowledge and commitment of the Library Service in networks of guidance. It is possible that the service would be willing, in collaboration with concerned agencies, to develop local educational guidance units and contact points, at least on a pilot basis. The experience of the shop-front, one-door entry, centrally situated LINFO could be beneficially applied to the creation of specialised educational guidance units. There are also very interesting ideas to be explored on the creation of mobile units. As the Library Service is not a part of the formal Regional Educational structure it could be seen to have an independence and autonomy which might resolve problems of vested

interest and safeguard the primacy of clients' interests.

Many library staff have extensive knowledge of local people and conditions. They already have constructive contact with A.B.E., Careers, Job Centres, C.E. and F.E. colleges but at present, because of the difficulties of achieving collaboration, are tending to 'plough their own furrow' and get on with what they can do best'. There is however a genuine concern with educational guidance and priority given to the 'disadvantaged', 'community' information and as much out-reach work as staff can manage. Staff are clear that passive information is insufficient and that personal guidance is required.

They have expertise and experience in developing information bases and staff at LINFO have experience of dealing with NETWORK. A senior member of staff is specifically appointed to work in community information services.

It is possible then that constructive discussions could take place between Library Services, the Divisional Coordinating group and A.C.P.G.s on the development of local units and networks. It is considered that, as A.B.E. workers do have a great deal of experience in direct educational and guidance work with adults, some priority should go to appointing more permanent staff in this area of work and consideration given to their functions in guidance training for workers in other agencies. It is important that C.E. workers have training and clearer priorities in guidance work if they are to effectively fulfil their out-reach functions and uncover latent demand amongst traditional non-participants.

Such a role for library services may well not be appropriate for every division but a pilot development of this kind in Renfrew could provide extremely valuable knowledge and experience which would be of intrinsic and immediate value to adults in the Division, could be utilised in other areas as appropriate and possibly form a training centre for adult guidance both within and outwith the Region.

If such arrangements with the Library Service are not possible, then the experience of LINFO and of the library staff could well be used in the creation of local guidance units and networks under the present administrative arrangements. In either case it would be essential to use the direct guidance and educational experience of A.B.E. workers, including those involved in the 'Improved Access to Learning Project' in Renfrew.

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CHAPTER 3 GUIDANCE IN LOTHIAN

Foreword

This report was written independently and without prior knowledge or discussion of the very useful Report of the Adult Guidance Working Group "Guidance for Adults in Lothian", February 1987 (1). Our own recommendations for an autonomous but collaborative guidance unit and a single-entry shop front unit support those made in the report and we hope will provide independent confirmation of the soundness of the Working Group's Conclusions and Recommendations' which are included in Appendix I to this chapter. On reading the Working Group's report and recommendations we would have at this stage three comments to offer which we think have an application both within Lothian and in other regions.

(i) It is possible that multi-agency co-operation will be difficult to achieve despite expressions of good-will and that vested interests may endanger the purposes of the recommendations. The composition of the Regional Adult Guidance Steering Group, to which it is proposed that the Guidance Unit be accountable, might take these potential difficulties into account by giving extremely careful consideration to the appointment of a Chairperson who is, and is perceived to be independent, who has a high level of political credibility and who will effectively represent the interests of adult learners. The latter should also be directly represented in the membership of the Steering Group.

(ii) We would repeat our concern that whatever guidance arrangements are made they must feed effectively into curriculum development amongst the "providing" agencies. The question of effective access and the purposes of learners remain centrally and crucially concerned with "access to what?". If curricula are inappropriate and feed-back mechanisms ineffective the whole structure of guidance will be fatally flawed and technically unsound.

(iii) It is our view that guidance must go together with adequate provision of general and basic education. Talking people through their situations frequently requires educational programmes which assist people to perceive their purposes more clearly and to move into a coherent and recognisable structures of learning. This implies an increase or reallocation of resources towards broadly defined and responsive adult education programmes both subject and issue based run by both the region and voluntary agencies. The evidence is that tutors with direct experience of such programmes frequently make excellent guidance

workers and could provide training in guidance.

Development in Lothian Region

Major policy and programme developments in guidance have taken place in Lothian pushed along by the impetus of the 16+ programme. A regional 16+ Steering Group, a Regional Guidance Implementation Group, a Regional Working Group on Guidance, School College Partnership Groups and Area Guidance Groups involving schools, F.E. Colleges, Community Education workers and Careers have been established. The objectives, as in Strathclyde, are to develop a coherent, comprehensive and accessible programme of learning and guidance with young and mature adults.

The Careers Service has taken a leading role in establishing an "Adult Guidance Network" which has representatives from -

Further Education Colleges, Community Education (including Adult Basic Education), University Education , Edinburgh University Settlement, Community Service Volunteers, The Bridges Project, Workers Educational Association, Small Firms Information Service (SDA), Adult Training Programme (MSC), Community Schools, Scottish Centre for the Tuition of the Disabled and The Careers Service.

Policy on guidance since 1985 has involved the following -

(a) The development of an integrated inter-agency approach;

(b) The development of a personal guidance base for school children in S4 and for the 16+ group;

(c) Guidance is for all students, a responsibility of all staff, and should be seen as an integral part of curricular teaching;

(d) Planned transition from school to adult life based on continuing negotiation;

(e) The recognition that information alone is insufficient and must be supported by a student centred approach to decisions.

Schools are responsible for the development of an S4 Social Education programme which should involve elements related to the Action Plan; an induction to F.E. and input to these courses from F.E., Careers and Community Education.

Further Education Colleges should develop advice and guidance on the basis of referral and self-referral and provide specialist advice on the modular programme.

Community Education

(a) should provide first-line guidance for evening centre students and referral to sources of information on schools and colleges;

(b) develop awareness of the Action Plan (or National Certificate)and its availability in the community;

(c) provide points of contact for those not directly covered by Action Plan provision;

(d) represent "community" needs to the Area Guidance Group;

(e) assist with an inter-agency approach by making links effective; contribute to the S4 programmes and establish contact with sources of information in schools and colleges on Action Plan provision.

(f) C.E. are also providing some 16+ modules as part of evening class provision which is seen as part of a regional strategy for integrating F.E., Schools and C.E. programmes.

Strategies, policies and structures in Lothian are still, understandably, at a developmental stage and decisions are yet to be taken on the nature, extent and resources to be made available for guidance which is not yet effectively in place for the majority of adults - especially those who are educationally and financially least well-off.

Information and Guidance Provision in Lothian Region

To clarify the existing bases for information and guidance provision in Lothian, we deliberately included an attempt at a more comprehensive survey of the Region as a part of the overall national survey. To achieve this we attempted to include as many physical locations as possible which might or already do act as contact points for those seeking information about adult learning opportunities.

While the broader national survey is more fully dealt with in Chapter V and Appendix III we considered it valuable to separate out Lothians current provision in this chapter and to present more detailed raw data in Appendix II, where the range of

respondent organisations can be found. In Lothian alone 106 questionnaires were sent out by post to organisations ranging from Community Centres to the Careers Service and 78 were returned, representing a 74% rate of return.

Information about Adult Learning Oppportunities

Almost all of the respondents hold information on adult learning opportunities though less than half rate information giving as one of their major functions. Typically information is held in paper based storage - leaflets, prospectuses etc while less than 10% have access to computer or microfiche storage systems. Predominantly (67%) the organisations are passive in information gathering and state that information is updated whenever it is supplied. Typically (70%) hold no record of enquiries, enquirers or topics and the organisations have no way of assessing any uptake of information by enquirers. Clearly, evaluation of effectiveness is problematic in this situation.

Few respondents are confident that they hold comprehensive information either about modes of provision, for example, open learning or Community Education or hold comprehensive information on more detailed opportunities.

The following proportions of respondents reported that they had no information about the following opportunities:

	No Information
Private Education Institutes	75%
Open Tech Schemes	64%
Adult Education Associations	61%
National Extension College	54%
* Scotvec - Scottish National Certificate	51%
University Extra-Mural Classes	
Manpower Service Schemes	35%
Workers Educational Association	
School Based Opportunities	32%
Open University Courses	27%
Educational Broadcasting	25%
* 16+ Further Education	21%
Adult Basic Education	15%

(* While these two terms have strong elements of overlap - they were both used to reflect the existence and popularity of alternative usages.)

Clearly information dissemination is at an early and uncoordinated stage and may benefit from more systematic distribution efforts from the emerging regional guidance group.

While 80% of the respondents report that all members of the public have access to the information the organisation holds, they believe that the tendency is for it to be most accessed by people living in the immediate vicinity.

Face to face (94%) and telephone enquiries (80%) are the most common ways that the public get access while only 2 respondents report that the public can gain computer access to their information. Exhibitions and active promotion of information are reported by between half and three quarters of the organisations.

Similarly more than half of them offer other supporting services to enquirers, from referral to other agencies to individual counselling though it is rare for enquirers to be put in touch with those who have already tried out the educational opportunities that are being enquired about.

Similar proportions hold support information on grants, fee relief etc.

Links with existing or potential partners in a guidance network are very valuable, with the Regional Careers Service strongly linked with other organisations while some providers of opportunities are much less bound in.

[The figure for Formal Links with C.E. includes and reflects the responses of the 42 C.E. respondents and should be viewed in that light.]

Links outside the region to Network (Scotland Ltd) are reported as rare by the majority (82%) and there is widespread feeling that no adequate national policy on guidance has so far emerged.

Few have had any training to carry out information and guidance functions and demand for such training is strongly articulated.

An exhaustive analysis of the Lothian data would not be appropriate here since our purpose in gathering it was simply to use it as only one reflection of the state of provision currently operating. A more detailed treatment of the data is to be found in Chapter V and the Lothian data is reproduced in Appendix II for those who wish to examine it in more detail.

Information on Adult Learning Opportunities - Informal Further Education within the Community Education Service

Provision of adult learning opportunities in the Region is fragmented not least because Informal Further Education, or Adult Education still exists in parallel with opportunities provided by the Community Education Service within Community Centres. These IFE opportunities are still organised by part time organisers and typically run in school premises in the evenings on a termly basis although there is daytime and weekend provision. It is this IFE provision which has the nearest thing to an information service on a regional basis. In practice the region runs a telephone enquiry service about adult learning opportunities from its headquarters in the Community Education Service in Torphichen Street for approximately two weeks before classes commence from 5.15 - 8.00pm. For anyone who was aware of the existence of the service, there is no reason why it should not be consulted in the day time outwith this period, although the information is only really appropriate at key points in the calendar year.

Secretarial staff answering calls refer to a manual which lists all the IFE opportunities and the following sections, How to Enrol, Examination Classes, General Interest, Physical Activities, Day Classes, Food and Drink, Arts and Crafts, Languages, Music and Drama, Twilight Classes, Five Week Courses, Computer Studies, Weekend Courses, Women's Studies and Multi-cultural Classes. The Classification itself is of interest and perhaps indicative of traditional and predictable areas of demand for IFE, computing having become a part of the orthodoxy, yet the absence of categories such as science and technology, literature, social sciences is of interest. An enquirer can then expect to be given access via a secretary, not a trained guidance worker, to the contents of this manual which act as a back up to the large advertisments which appear at that time of the year in the local press. An enquirer can find out for example, that if they wish to take biology 'O' level, they can do it at a cost of £18.00 for one evening per week, examination fees not included, and their choice is the Royal High School on Tuesday, Telford College, Currie or Tynecastle High on Wednesday, Drummond High, Stevenson or Telford College on Thursdays. Similar information on costs, courses, locations and dates exists for SCE, GCE and RSA Examination Classes and Scotvec National Certificate modules.

The bulk of the manual however, contains information on the IFE courses and is arranged in a standard format;

Category (ie Arts and Crafts)
Course Title
Grade
Maximum Number of Students
Description (This should cover what the student should expect to learn and also describe the general area covered by the course.)
Materials Provided
Other Information

While these guidelines are provided for the prospective tutors to complete, the contents are inevitably highly variable.

Sports and physical activities tend to have common activities, so that a general description of aerobics is given rather than a specific description of one particular class, while clothing and equipment are a variable here. Language classes distinguish often between 3 levels, 1 beginners, 2 intermediate (post 'O' Grade), 3 advanced (Higher level and beyond).

Contents of each course description also vary from the terse:-

Category - Day Classes

Course Title - Art

Maximum Number of Students - 25

Description - Rudiments of painting in oil and watercolour, composition, colour etc.

Materials to be provided by Student - Boards, paint brushes and material relevant.

to much fuller outlines of course content, level of entry etc.

This service is limited in many respects and could bear much more extensive development. It is a one way service of information export, so names of enquiries, addresses, nature of enquiry are not taken and do not provide a basis for the estimation of latent or unmet demand or for contact and referral to local C.E. workers. While information maybe given to a telephone enquirer, there is no clear policy of attempting to link enquirers with Community Education in a broader sense. Similarly, while the F.E. sectors offerings constitute a part of the information base, named contacts in the colleges are not built into the manual as key information sources for enquirers. In short, responses are customer driven and as such generate as much as the enquirers knows how to ask about, as much as is contained in the manual or

as much as the secretary happens to be able to think of. The sort of systematic approach which establishes basic details of the enquirer, name, address, age, marital status, occupational status, educational background, interests and purposes which lie at the base of any guidance response are not there precisely because this is an information service.

But even as an information service, it works from a partial view of what information is appropriate, restricting it to IFE type course provision, rather than broader information about opportunities for information, guidance and learning opportunities. Links between this area of IFE/AE provision, between Adult Basic Education provision, school based provision, and community centre based provision, provision by voluntary agencies and the Further Education sector are hardly touched upon by this telephone based enquiry service and for the enquirer, both provision and information must seem equally fragmented. Despite these barriers, nevertheless, staff feel that the volume of demand for information and advice on adult learning opportunities is such that if advertising were to be more effective they would be inundated by requests. While this limited area of information provision might serve as a base from which to expand an information provision and telephone enquiry service with a much broader remit which attempted to inform on the full range of possibilities, centres, contacts alternative providers, it would not be an appropriate basis for the development of guidance work of a more sensitive face to face nature.

The Role of the Careers Service

The Careers Service has a statutory obligation to provide Careers information and guidance to the school leaver population and to those who have recently left school. In practice they tend to operate with an age group which spans from the early teens to the early twenties. While work with adults has gone on in an ad hoc way for the past decade, as the legislation which directs the service is permissive in this respect, like many other Careers Services they have not broadcast their services to adults too loudly for fear of being overwhelmed by adult enquirers whose demands could not be met without prejudice to the statutory provision for young people. Using Infirmary Street - South Side Resource Centre as a base, one Careers Officer has over the past two years been permitted to allocate an increasing proportion of her time to work with adults and importantly to the development of a more systematic network of local and relevant contacts concerned with adult learning opportunities.

The mounting of Information Fairs for Adults and the creation of a directory of practitioners in Information and Counselling for

Adults on Learning Opportunities represent two recent initiatives in this direction. The "Learn in 86" Information Fair gives an indication of the nature of the informal network in terms of those who were represented at the fair as contributors, including:- four F.E. Colleges; Telford; Stevenson; Esk Valley and West Lothian - often by named contact people; Lothian Regional Council Bursaries Department; Adult Basic Education Service; Community Education Service; Careers Service; Edinburgh University's Extra Mural Department and Arts Faculty (by the Admissions Dean); Heriot Watt University; Napier College; the Open University; the Manpower Services Commission; the Scottish Centre for Tuition of the Disabled; Edinburgh Walk in Numeracy Centre; Edinburgh Volunteers Exchange; Wester Hailes Education Centre; Edinburgh University Settlement (Kirk of Field College, Micro Beacon and Second Chance to Learn); the Workers Educational Association; the Scottish Development Agency's Small Firms Information Service; and Network (Scotland) Ltd. At the fair, information desks with handout and leaflet materials and staffed by contact persons were the most typical forms of contribution though there were a small number of video cassettes available for viewing.

The view of some Careers Officers is that there is an enormous pool of latent demand which could be tapped if resources were available. Interest in the notion of developing EGSA - Educational Guidance Services for Adults has grown rapidly over the past two years and Officers receive as many as 200 requests a year to give talks on the topic. Adults who do come forward as enquirers are of course predominantly a self referred group and as such tend to be highly motivated. Often they are individuals who have stepped off the educational ladder for a while and wish to get back on and climb higher.

The Officers are specialists in dealing with information about educational opportunities and in counselling on initial career selection though in practice are more accustomed to dealing with young people than with adults. Those with higher education, university graduates for example, would not usually be dealt with, but would be referred to the University Careers Advisory Services or to College based Advisory Services, since such specialised information on opportunities is seen as being outside the range of the regional service. In practice this means that some adults have enquiries which fit more appropriately into the scope of the service than others. For example adults who come to the service as a result of their participation in Adult Basic Education may find it an appropriate route through which to investigate further educational opportunities.

On the other hand, if they wish vocational guidance as, for example, unemployed workers in the paper industry, the response in terms of career advice on employment opportunities is more problematic since the service is more focussed on the labour market in relation to young people. Referral to the Manpower

Services Commission's Job Centres as a part of the emerging network is a more frequent response.

Counselling and information on educational provision and opportunities then can currently be appropriately provided for both the young school leavers and for adults (in small numbers) but the second focus of provision, vocational guidance can only be effectively provided for the younger client and not so effectively for the adult enquirer, unless new occupational choices are reached via adult learning opportunities.

The view of some of the officers was that the MSC initiatives in Job Clubs, Work Start, Replan etc were indications that money was being put back into adult vocational guidance which had been lost when the Vocational Guidance Units closed. However, the feeling was that compared with England where many local careers services, Sheffield and Birmingham for example, had made more significant progress in developing Adult Guidance Services progress had been slow in Scotland while conversely with the development of 16+ modules many areas of provision had become in principle more accessible for adults than in England.

If faced with the development of more work with adults many areas of difficulty were perceived on the basis of current experience. Adults do not conceive of themselves as neatly compartmentalised and having separate educational demands, vocational demands and personal demands, consequently the boundaries to counselling, unless well prescribed, are likely to be much wider for adults than for school-leavers. Personal, social, marital and vocational counselling may all be responses that are appropriate for one adult and yet do not lie within the domain of a careers service. For the careers officer, although well prepared by a one year post graduate diploma course and a probationary year, training does not extend to adult vocational guidance and to dealing with adults who require counselling on such a broad front as outlined above. While referral may in practice deal with the issue at one level, the problem of disentangling the vocational guidance element from a complex set of adult demands and dealing with it effectively is seen as more problematic than dealing with vocational guidance for a younger age group. In short, adults are seen to be more complex than young people to deal with.

A second problematic issue is the framework for adult vocational guidance. Work with school leavers has already been systematised for some years; standardised procedures, forms, and methods of assessing young people's vocational intentions are well known and tested by constant usage. For the young person a file is built up which included Abilities, Aptitudes, Attainments, Home Circumstances, Health, School and Behaviour and this combined with a procedural system for reaching young people, individual school based vocational interviews, visiting employers, the

unemployed register and YTS follow up, all contribute to a coherent system. While there are alternative elements which may be more appropriate for working with adults, the Jiig-Cal adult system, or the Open University's Work Choices pack for example, such a coherent and appropriate set of structures and procedures do not as yet exist for adults.

Other agencies have a role to play in the development of some of the elements that might go to make up a pattern of appropriate provision for adults. The development of guides to 16+ provision in book form, could provide another resource with which to build up an adult careers section in local libraries. The storage of 16+ opportunities on computer databases in such libraries might offer another alternative along with similar access to information on open learning opportunities. Other partners in the developing network, the Community Education Service, Adult Basic Education, the Further Education colleges are seen by the careers services as allies in the development of the beginnings of a more coherent framework of adult guidance.

This indicates the third area of difficulty, the need for closer integration and co-ordination of those elements of information and guidance provision that are scattered through the emerging network. Suffice it to say that increased staffing is a pre-requisite, the early stages of development are in themselves problematic. When organisations send a different staff member to each meeting of a network co-ordinating committee, then each meeting will begin at square one with a discussion of purposes, resources etc, until a common understanding has emerged not only in the participant institutions, but in all members of staff of that institution who have a role to play in adult guidance. The emergence of a common understanding, if not agreement on purposes, modes of approach, problems and long term goals is a crucial precursor of the effective functioning of such a network.

The Regional careers service is well placed to play a major role in the development of educational guidance services for adults with the co-operation of those other partners in the emerging local network, provided that it is allowed to do so and that appropriate resources are allocated.

Information and Guidance within FE

The rapid expansion in Open Learning Courses, Open Tech, and Flexistudy have already made an impact on the work of the FE colleges and have begun to involve them in work with a widening adult participant group. Telford College, for example now has approximately 800 people enrolled in flexistudy programmes, receiving weekly or fortnightly packages of learning materials

and coming into college every 6 weeks for face to face tutorials. Telephone tutorials, self assessment sheets, tutor marked assignments all can be used to support adult learners in 'O' and 'H' Grade studies, 16+ modules, Open University preparation or Foundation courses and a wide range of courses in science, engineering etc.

The clientele are often shiftworkers, for whom regular college hours are inaccessible and come from Lothian region with smaller numbers from Central region and Fife. Many are housewives, a fact echoed in the rough proportion of 75% women 25% men using this opportunity. The participants are usually over 21, not simply because of self selection, but more because younger initial enquiries may be advised and directed more towards a face to face learning situation than to a distance learning opportunity on the grounds, that firstly it is more appropriate and secondly they may be eligible for support in such a course of study. The impression of senior staff is that participants who choose this route tend to have vocational purposes at the outset.

Their interests lie in upgrading, changing jobs and establishing base or entry qualifications for occupations, few they believe do it out of interest alone. This may be influenced by the financial considerations, since bursaries are not available for Open Learning and self financing for 2 SCE subjects for example may cost £70-80. This in itself presents a problem for guidance in college, while fees may be waived for those on supplementary benefit, there are many who fall into the trap of employment with insufficient funds to finance further study or between the various modes of compensatory assistance. The Nurse who wishes to upgrade from SEN to SRN works shifts on low pay, can't get a bursary and finds self-financing difficult; the wife of a man on supplementary benefit finds herself ill provided for in financial support. While payments by instalments is not possible, despite requests for it, informal methods of facilitating study are adopted where possible. Nevertheless access to funding for open learning is a crucial issue in adult learning opportunities and provides another guidance issue for those involved.

While Open Learning is relatively local in its clientele, Open Tech has put Telford into a rather wider network of support for learning opportunities. The college itself acts as a base for Open Tech programmes directed to Oil Related Industries On Shore. Launched in November 1985, the numbers are now building up and the college is meeting more demands both to export its own modules for other colleges to support and to provide materials and support services for Open Tech courses originating from other sources.Almost all departments at the college have interests and commitments in the field of open learning and the college has plans to develop a learning by appointment service, rather like that provided by Napier College. Initially such a system might be used to support the existing in house open learning

initiatives, but its role in the future could be widened. While this expansion of Open Learning Opportunities extends the field of Adult Learning with a welcome range of additions they should not simply be seen as an entirely separate form of provision. There may be a certain degree of movement both ways between regular in college opportunities and open-learning opportunities, with younger students moving out of college to employment to OL involvement, while mature learners may find Open Learning a useful initial point of contact before attempting a return to opportunities in college.

The potential for mutual links with other relevant agencies exists, but staff are unsure of the extent to which the potential for links is recognised by other providers. For example, the basic communications course which includes numeracy, might serve as a post ABE follow on course, and in practice does receive referrals of those with special educational needs. Senior staff are not sure how well known such opportunities are in Craigroyston High School, a close by potential source of referral. While the college staff do in practice refer enquirers back to Craigroyston and to the Adult Basic Education Service, they are unsure of how effectively the relationship is reciprocated by other providers of opportunities.

Open Learning for the college has stimulated participation from a new clientele, who cannot participate in more traditional FE provision, who are concerned with retraining and updating vocational skills and knowledge. Before the advent of the 16+ Action Plan, the alternative was to offer specialised short course provision, a mode of provision which was still inaccessible to some and reflected in courses which were not full. Open Learning has in many ways extended onwards accessibility to the in house course materials and a close relationship between Open Learning packages and individualised in house teaching still exists.

Implications for Guidance

Senior staff already are involved in a college based student advisory service which provides guidance on a wide range of topics, for example, Personal Problems, Social and Family Problems, Health and Welfare, Careers Advice, Advice on Programmes of Study, and Accomodation. Such advisory services are organised on a departmental basis and with a separate professional tutor with additional access to a Careers Officer. With the support of limited creche facilities, social and recreational facilities and a students association the main vehicles of support tend rather more towards meeting the demands of a younger post school clientele, than to a widely differentiated adult group. Support, guidance, advice and

information for those already enrolled may be easier to provide than for the casual adult enquirer or for the person seeking in depth vocational guidance.

While it is acknowledged by senior staff that guidance is crucial before entering into college based learning opportunities, they think that information about opportunities is not widely accessible and not in a form which makes access easy. The Open Learning directory, for example, is separate from all the usual college prospectuses and this separation of information sources indicates the lack of coherence of information provision. The Open Learning directory or a prospectus on its own is seen as insufficient since for many potential participants it does not immediately mean very much, since they require more time consuming and immediate help and advice to clarify intentions and purposes. Currently, rather like the Careers Service, Senior FE Advisory Staff feel that there is a severe lack of systematic proven and appropriate tools and procedures with which to access adults experience, educational levels and background before they embark on courses.

Ad hoc responses are the norm, and the lack of appropriate tools for a structured assessment of past achievements for diagnostic assessment for referral to other agencies means that for the adult who is not sure of what is available, and is not sure quite which opportunities they wish to pursue, guidance is extremely difficult. Given a heavy commitment to guidance for those who are already on course, even computerised guidance systems like Jig Cal which may establish interests and activities, still make large demands on staff time. At the time of the study, one possible solution being discussed was that of creating an information and guidance module in the 16+ Action Plan format, which could be made available to a wide range of agencies for their own use with participants and enquirers. Such a module could be available for delivery in schools, colleges the Community Education service, ABE, WEA etc.

Such innovative approaches to addressing the complex issue of information and guidance for adults about learning opportunities by turning it into course content are worthy of promotion and development. If such modules could in reality be mounted in the wide range of locations with which adults already make contact, and if they could be mounted at a low cost or no cost for those in special categories, they would serve to elaborate the existing limited information and guidance provision. With the addition of limited access to Jiig Cal, more economical group counselling, access to taster courses such an approach might have a major impact for relatively cheap development costs.

Within the colleges, existing staff development for guidance and advisory work is still predominantly focussed on working with those participants who have already enrolled and embarked upon courses of study. In the near future, it is unlikely that increasing staffing in this sector will permit the development of more outreach work with adults in their communities or of a broader based in college advisory service which could cope with demands from the general public for information and guidance on the entire range of opportunities. Some would also add a note of caution that any institution which has a vested interest in course provision and recruitment cannot realistically serve as an impartial base for information and guidance on opportunities provided by other agencies. The development of a module available for others to use, open to public scrutiny and capable of modification and development in the light of experience and feedback would then seem to be a significant contribution for the colleges to make.

Issues in Guidance in Lothian Region

The following is a synthesis based on ten interviews with senior and field staff in Community Education, F.E. Colleges, Adult Basic Education, the University Settlement and Edinburgh District Library Service. Each interviewee is well informed in the area of guidance and its provision in the field. It should be said that all agreed that (1) despite policy there is a major lack of resourcing for effective adult guidance in the field. (2) there are problems of vested interest and competition between concerned agencies in developing and potential networking arrangements.

Community education workers do not often teach directly but organise educational programmes and have contact with adults who traditionally have not benefited from adult education and community education provisions. C.E. workers should be central in the provision of guidance for adults but are largely perceived, by for example many influential F.E. personnel, as people who may be useful for marketing, giving out posters, leaflets and the provision of information. In terms of policy C.E. workers should be perceived as staff who can provide guidance in its deeper and wider sense, develop effective outreach and be instrumental in changing curricula in the providing institutions. But it is admitted that out of the total of 125 C.E. workers perhaps a maximum of 30 are ready to perform such functions and would need training to do so.

Most C.E. workers to not see educational guidance work as part of their normal functions either because of their training and/or because they are trapped by organisational and management structures into the administration of community centres. This

administration it is suggested could be carried out by well trained clerical workers and management committees thus releasing professional community educators for outreach, direct educational, community development and educational guidance functions. It should be said that the roles of C.E. workers are frequently unclear to F.E. and school staff.

But given this background it is the view of experienced community educators and ABE workers that the F.E. and school-based 16+ and academic subject based programme is inappropriate for many adults in terms of both the nature of content and curricula and the ethos and approach to learning found in many F.E. Colleges and schools despite their attempts to change. Curricula in the 16+ programme are frequently seen as being imposed from the "top" and as not taking sufficiently into account the intentions of adults who respond better to locally planned subject and issue based programmes. These views are supported by senior and local staff in community education, adult basic education, the University Settlement and in the Adult Learning Project (Gorgie - Dalry.)

However, there is recognition of the significant demand amongst adults for certificated and vocational programmes. Evidence of this demand derives in part from the Adult Learning Project experience and from the Adults in School Classes programmes. As a result of such recognition ALP responded to F.E. Colleges, the Extra-Mural Department, the University Settlement, ESL organisations, and the WEA, each of whom had named guidance contact personnel. ALP staff recognised that they were working with some adults who could not go on their own to the local F.E. College but were looking for the kind of education offered at a college. Each agency provided leaflets, prospectuses, information and shop-front advertisements.

Once again, as with LINFO in Renfrew, the value of a one-door entry shop-front educational information, guidance and referral agency or unit was demonstrated. No advertisement other than the shop-front display and word of mouth took place. Over a 12 month period 150 to 200 or enquiries were logged (although due to lack of clerical resources this is an approximate figure) and referred to the appropriate providing agencies. As ALP has only 2 full time professional staff who became involved not only in the provision of information but in lengthy personal advice sessions they are having to cut back their commitment to guidance work.

Senior staff in Lothian ABE, CE, the Regional Working Group and ALP favour shop front one door entry units which are properly staffed and backed up by a network of guidance workers. They are clear that shop front units require outreach workers. They are also clear that adults should not be placed on courses by information alone as this could lead to "failure" and disillusionment. Adults frequently require talking through their

situation if they are to make sound judgements. Personal guidance also requires backup in the form of provision for an adequate general educational base which allows people to locate themselves more clearly, be aware of the range of vocational and training choices available, and be in a better position to make judgements concerning their next move. These factors imply that more resources be devoted to Adult Basic and general education, pre-'O' Grade work and a properly funded guidance and counselling network. Short term, or what is commonly referred to as "funny money," will not be sufficient. The ALP experience demonstrates that the professionalism and dedication on the part of one or two workers in various agencies is not sufficient in the long term and that resources and personnel are required. This is confirmed in all interviews.

The evidence is that ABE is poorly funded in relation to both appropriate provision and guidance. The two are linked in the everyday work of ABE since it is standard practice to involve all potential participants in an initial interview to establish, intentions, purposes and needs. In one area of Lothian the full time ABE organiser has no other full time teaching staff and no full time administrative help. There is only provision for 24 hours a week for part time group tutors and 6 hours a week for part time staff to support voluntary tutors. The demand for paid group tutors is high and cannot be met. Co-operation with CE staff is developing but in reality consists of functional co-operation between well disposed individuals.

Whilst relations with mainstream CE are sometimes difficult in that some CE workers feel that ABE are taking up financial and human resources which should be "theirs" it is not felt that ABE would be better based with FE. It is considered by staff in ABE, and voluntary agencies such as the University Settlement, that the FE colleges' approaches to working with adults are not yet appropriately developed, that much of the new modular curricula are old courses in a new form and that new curricula need to be developed for adults.

ABE does not have the resources to develop guidance units on its own account except in so far as this takes place in its normal educational work with adults. Co-operation between FE, CE, ABE, schools and voluntary agencies could produce a network but it is considered that there is totally inadequate funding for guidance staff training. The difficulties of co-operation and problems of vested interests are commonly mentioned.

The ABE evidence in Lothian confirms the existence of substantial latent and expressed demand which cannot be met. It is continually emphasised by ABE, ALP and voluntary agency workers

in the WEA and University Settlement that provision of guidance would create even more demand which could not be met with present resources and strategies. It is also emphasised that the 16+ programme while being able to cater for the purposes of some adults is certainly not suitable for significant numbers (the view of experienced workers is the majority) of adults who are unemployed, deaf, mentally handicapped or other types of target groups so frequently mentioned as being of utmost priority. For them the curriculum is frequently inaccessible and inappropriate.

Developments in the school/college partnership groups in both Lothian and Strathclyde stem from the efforts being put into the development of management structures for the 16+ plan. It is recognised that pre-course and on-course guidance is necessary and central to the success of the modularised 16+ programme of non-advanced education if school leavers who had previously left school without qualifications are to study modules either in school or in college or in combinations of the two.

It is understandable that schools and colleges with falling, or potentially falling rolls, and a careers service which has a vested and genuine interest in developing into an all age service would be interested in providing guidance in relation to the 16+ and school subjects programme. What is less clear is firstly how adults are to gain more effective access to 16+ programmes, general education, ABE and Open learning opportunities; and secondly the roles CE and ABE should be playing in guidance and management structures. If effective access to coherent learning programmes for adults is to be created managements structures and policies must clarify these issues.

A major difficulty for careers, schools and FE colleges is that they too lack resources for the creation of pre-course counselling for adults and young people. The Careers Service does lack resources for working with adults in Lothian. Most resources in FE have had to go into curriculum development work on the 16+ modular programme.Guiding people through a programme of 2,000 modules based on principles of responsiveness and more open access and the development of relationships with the training needs of commercial concerns are major tasks and FE colleges in Lothian have few resources to devote to open and resource based learning. There is little left over in the colleges for the guidance work required.

At one FE college an Assistant Principal 'Resources' is responsible for guidance and counselling but is also responsible for the operation of estimates, deployment of departmental resources, development of accommodation, health and safety, new technologies, educational technology, staff development, staff discipline and student welfare and discipline. She is therefore

not able to devote as much time to guidance as she would wish. It is considered that most staff are heavily involved in developing the 16+ modules and though guidance should be integral to their work in fact have little time for guidance. A senior appointment in the guidance field has now been made in the college but she has a 15 hour per week teaching commitment. There is a guidance group in the college but each departmental representative has only 1.5 hours per week to devote to it and it relates mainly to on-course and not pre-course guidance and recruitment.

Efforts have been made in the college to develop a Flexistudy programme for adults which staff have developed in their own time but the fees have been increased and there are major resource problems in providing guidance and appropriate materials for adult groups. The regional open access policy for adults is not backed up by appropriate staffing and resource allocation. Fixed college budgets reduce the degree of flexibility and responsiveness required in making provision for adults. The college has to make money in other areas to pay for programmes with, for example, unemployed adults apart from programmes such as RESTART which is not highly regarded by college staff.

The school/college groups have an embryonic guidance structure and good practice in integrated schools/college/CE educational programmes is developing. But resources are lacking for the creation of a properly funded and staffed guidance programme both on-course and pre-course and arrangements at present do not effectively include adults despite the presence of community education representatives (as in Strathclyde ABE is not directly represented) on the school/college groups. Colleges tend to see more mileage in marketing provision to employers and schools rather than working through community education. There appears to be little contact with libraries.

In FE colleges then there is a) a major lack of resources for guidance, b) most of what is provided is on-course guidance, c) they operate more closely with schools and employers than with CE and ABE, d) there are major problems in financing responsive adult provision.

It is necessary to repeat that the evidence consistently demonstrates that where responsive adult educators (in for example ALP, the University Settlement, the WEA and Lothian ABE) who have experience of direct educational work with adults become involved with guidance for their own and other agencies, the demand for both guidance and appropriate provision becomes so extensive that is cannot be met from present resources. What also becomes very clear is that the valuable experience required for adult guidance work derives from direct educational work with

adults, ie practicing adult educators make excellent guidance workers and trainers of guidance workers. The policy question is why, given the evidence, more resources are not allocated and/or re-allocated to the permanent employment of such workers as essential to an efficient, coherent and developmental structure of adult learning in Scotland in terms of direct provision, the development of appropriate curricula and guidance?

The employment of such workers would not cut across vested interests as they would increase the adult market for all providers including FE. The experience and well informed views expressed in our interviews with staff in Lothian and Strathclyde working in CE, ABE, FE, libraries and voluntary agencies confirm the fundamental importance of this policy and resource allocation question. It is of some significance in approaching these issues in our previous research (2) we reached similar conclusions from a different and wider perspective.

The evidence also consistently demonstrates that information alone is insufficient; that personal guidance services are required for efficiency in this field of work; and that effective guidance must essentially involve curriculum development by the providing agencies to create appropriate programmes of learning.

Summary of Developments in Lothian

The Careers Service has been given a major role in developing thinking and practice in guidance but the programme is still at a pilot stage. The major issues which emerge are as follows:

1. As in Strathclyde, the attempt to develop a more coherent modular structure operates largely on a schools, F.E. and 16+ axis which tends to leave out the vast majority of adults. Initiatives are dominated by the 16+ programme which is suitable for some but at present not large groups of adults. The concerns of younger adults and school-leavers tend to predominate and the development of an adequate general educational base and guidance for adults is under-resourced.

2. There is much evidence of concern for co-ordination and development of more effective guidance work in the F.E. Colleges and some joint project work with schools and C.E. workers is developing. But the colleges are not yet involving "disadvantaged" and mature adults on a large scale, though genuine attempts are being made. Guidance structures in colleges are developing and all staff have guidance responsibilities but there is a shortage of specialist guidance staff and those that exist have heavy responsibilities in other areas of work. Out-

reach and pre-course guidance is therefore limited.

3. Community education staff should have, and are given, a central role in contacting mature and younger adults in the community not covered by the more formal F.E./School arrangements but, as in Strathclyde, the majority do not yet see this as a major part of their work. It is considered that the quality and quantity of information and advice for adults is low. Community Education workers frequently cannot take the task on either due to the limitations of their own training or range of other tasks and priorities, including the administrative burdens of running community centres. But there are areas of good guidance practice in Community Education which may be built upon. These areas of good practice depend on the background training and orientation of Community Education workers and good relations with ABE staff.

4. Much experience of guidance has been gained in the Gorgie shop-front Adult Learning Project which has involved F.E. Colleges, the W.E.A., the University Extra-Mural Department and Settlement, as well as the project's own programmes. This guidance work may have to be curtailed due to lack of staff.

5. It is clear from experience in A.B.E. and A.L.P. that adults require personal guidance in making educational decisions and that information alone is insufficient.

6. District Library Services, despite innovative approaches in, for example, Edinburgh District, are not bound into guidance structures at present.

7. There are problems of vested interest and competition for control in guidance work. Questions of falling school rolls and competition between the colleges may be involved.

8. Much more training in guidance is required.

9. There is as yet neither the equipment, expertise or familiarity with computer based information handling systems to make a major and immediate response with a computer based information and guidance service.

10. While information fairs represent a useful innovation, they are still accessible to only a minority of mobile, well informed and articulate adults.

The experience of A.L.P. and recommendations made by A.B.E., C.E. and Careers workers are at present being considered. These recommendations recognise the importance of the network of professionals which is being established at present but argue that this is a small beginning to achieving local and effective networks and contact points. As in Strathclyde, the importance of one-door entry, shop-front, specialist educational guidance services are recognised. It is recommended that a number of these be developed together with a central teaching and guidance unit in the City of Edinburgh. It is considered that these will need to be funded and staffed on a permanent basis and that short-term money would prove to be counter-productive in educational and social terms.

However, the problem does arise that, if effective guidance and publicity are increased, the latent demand which will be uncovered could not be met by present educational resources. The requirements of many mature adults are not met by the 16+ programme.

The question arises as to which agency or department should have the major responsibility for the development of guidance services bearing in mind the primacy of clients' interests. In terms of present functions, the Careers, Schools and F.E. Colleges may be seen to have the major responsibilities for school-leavers, the 16+ programme and more vocationally oriented programmes which logically include the development of an adequate general educational base. A.B.E., A.L.P. and a number of voluntary agencies such as the W.E.A. and University Settlement have direct experience of adult guidance and the ways in which it connects with curriculum development. These should be centrally involved in the development of local guidance units and in training. Community Education staff should perform a geniune out-reach function in adult guidance but have many other duties and require training.

In this situation, and with the uncertainty surrounding the future functions of the Careers Service, it may well be that the Region has to make a major initiative by appointing at least two senior guidance workers with a high level of credibility to establish a developmental guidance unit which has a degree of autonomy and which has the authority to create effective regional and local units, networks and contact points. Without such an initiative and the appropriate allocation of resources, it is doubtful whether guidance for the majority of mature adults will become effective. It also seeme clear that extra resources will have to be allocated to A.B.E., and appropriate voluntary agencies to provide both for training in adult guidance and for increased provision of general adult education programmes. These latter are essential if (a) educational requirements of mature adults are to be met and (b) adults are to gain effective access to the 16+ programmes, (c) if, the necessary direct experience

of working educationally with adults is to be generated and fed into the Guidance Network.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 3.

REPORT OF THE ADULT GUIDANCE WORKING GROUP "GUIDANCE FOR ADULTS IN LOTHIAN"

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Demand for Adult Guidance

The principal conclusion of the consultation undertaken by the Scottish Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (SIACE) in researching its report "Scottish Adult Educational Guidance, 1986" was that the need for an adult guidance provision was clear. The findings of the Adult Guidance Working Group which are set out in this report confirm that such a need exists in Lothian Region. The present experience is that adults are seeking help in large numbers from the existing agencies. These adults are workers who require information on retraining, adult returners to education, college students, YTS completers, the young unemployed, redundant workers and the long term unemployed.

They have a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and they include adults with special needs and those from the ethnic minorities. The service they are given is inadequate. It is variable in quality, not comprehensive in delivery, lacks a properly organised information system or database and is provided by staff who are, in general, not trained in appropriate skills. Paradoxically, the deficiencies of the existing arrangements serve to mask the extent of the problem. The latent demand for information and advice from adults on education and training opportunities is substantial. Its extent will only be realised by the provision of an adult guidance service which is adequately resourced, equipped, managed and marketed. An information and advice service is the key to the concept of open access to education for adults. The recommendations which follow are concerned with how adult guidance should be delivered and assume that a properly developed guidance service will:

- be client centred;
- be accessible;
- provide information, advice and counselling, objectively;
- provide information which is accurate, up to date, reliable and local;
- be confidential
- be fully marketed to its potential client group.

Multi-Agency Approach

The evidence which may be gathered from:-

a) the existing experience in the Careers Service, in Community Education, in Further Education and in Community Schools in Lothian (Chapters 3-6 of this report);

b) the recommendations of the report on adult guidance from the Scottish Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (Appendix 1 of this report);

c) the arrangements in other authorities (Chapter 7 and Appendix 2 of this report); points to an effective model for the delivery of adult guidance in Lothian. That model is essentially multi-agency and collaborative. Expertise in adult guidance exists in schools, colleges, the community education service and in careers offices and should be built upon. It would not be appropriate to vest responsibility for adult guidance in any one agency. Instead, the existing provision requires to be formalised (in some cases), requires to be supported by training. The multi agency approach requires sharing of resources, common aims and methods and a network of referral points.

Adult Guidance : Support Mechanism

It is clear from the audit of existing provision set out in this report that a collaborative approach is feasible but that for such collaboration to be effective a support mechanism is necessary. It is proposed that an Adult Guidance Development Unit be established to be followed by an Adult Opportunities Shop.

Adult Guidance Development Unit

The overall remit of the Unit would be to act as a catalyst to effective collaboration and delivery in adult guidance. Its staffing would comprise 1 Senior Careers Officer, 1 Community Education Worker (c) and 1 Further Education Senior Lecturer. The objectives of the Unit would be:

1. to establish a coherent framework for adult guidance to ensure that the aims of adult guidance are widely understood, to identify examples of good practice and to encourage their replication;

2. to develop information provision for adults on education and other opportunities and on how to access them by establishing methods of information gathering, by devising appropriate means

of information presentation and dissemination and by arranging updating mechanisms;

3. to support the Adult Guidance Network and to develop its activities;

4. to develop training for adult guidance practitioners and to deliver such training;

5. to develop a computerised database of opportunities for adults in Lothian (specialist Careers Officer remit);

6. to develop adult learning materials related to the guidance need (Further Education and Community Education remit);

7. to market the adult guidance provision;

8. to ensure the development of adult guidance by means of 1, feedback to practitioners 2, contribution of views to policy formulation and 3, report to the Adult Guidance Steering Group.

Salary costs assuming scale maxima and including on-costs would be £44,580 in a full year. There would be an additional requirement for materials and other resources particularly in relation to computer development and marketing and for clerical and secretarial support.

Adult Opportunities Shop

The development of an Adult Opportunities Shop at a central location is seen as a parallel provision to the Adult Guidance Development Unit and would be the operational arm of the Unit. The Opportunities Shop's activities would emphasise the presentational and delivery aspects of adult guidance rather than the developmental aspects. The Shop's objectives would be:

1. to provide a 3 tier approach to guidance -

   (i) information on a self-help basis,
   (ii) advice and counselling as appropriate,
   (iii) group learning;

2. to provide a test bed for approaches and materials in adult guidance in development by the Unit;

3. to provide non-institutional access to information and advice particularly for disadvantaged and disaffected adults;

4. to provide a focus for the marketing of adult guidance.

The Opportunities Shop is not seen as a pilot provision. The long term aim is not to provide a network of such shops but is to replicate the functions and practices of the shop in a network of access points both institutional and non institutional including some in the voluntary sector.

Adult Guidance Network

In the proposed model for the delivery of adult guidance in Lothian, the Adult Guidance Support Unit and the Adult Opportunities Shop provide the core agency support for first level provision in Tertiary and Secondary Education and second level provision in other agencies. Figure 1 shows the model in diagramatic form.

Adult Guidance Steering Group

The multi-agency approach to adult guidance places responsibility for the delivery of guidance in each of the collaborating agencies. Within the Tertiary Division, the senior management of each section will determine the appropriate means of integration of adult guidance provision to the functions and structure of that section and will be advised by the work of the Adult Guidance Development Unit in the method of its delivery. The common features of the delivery in the Careers Service, Community Education and Further Education will be:

1. the identification of staff with specialist responsibility for adult guidance;

2. appropriate training and time allocation for these staff;

3. the participation of these staff in collaborative activities.

The Adult Guidance Development Unit should be accountable to an Adult Guidance Steering Group to ensure that the activities of the Unit are consistent with Divisional policy and that lines of

accountability are clear in the collaborative structure. It is proposed that the Steering Group should comprise one member of the Senior Management of the Careers Service, Community Education and Further Education sections and should be chaired at Senior Education Officer level.

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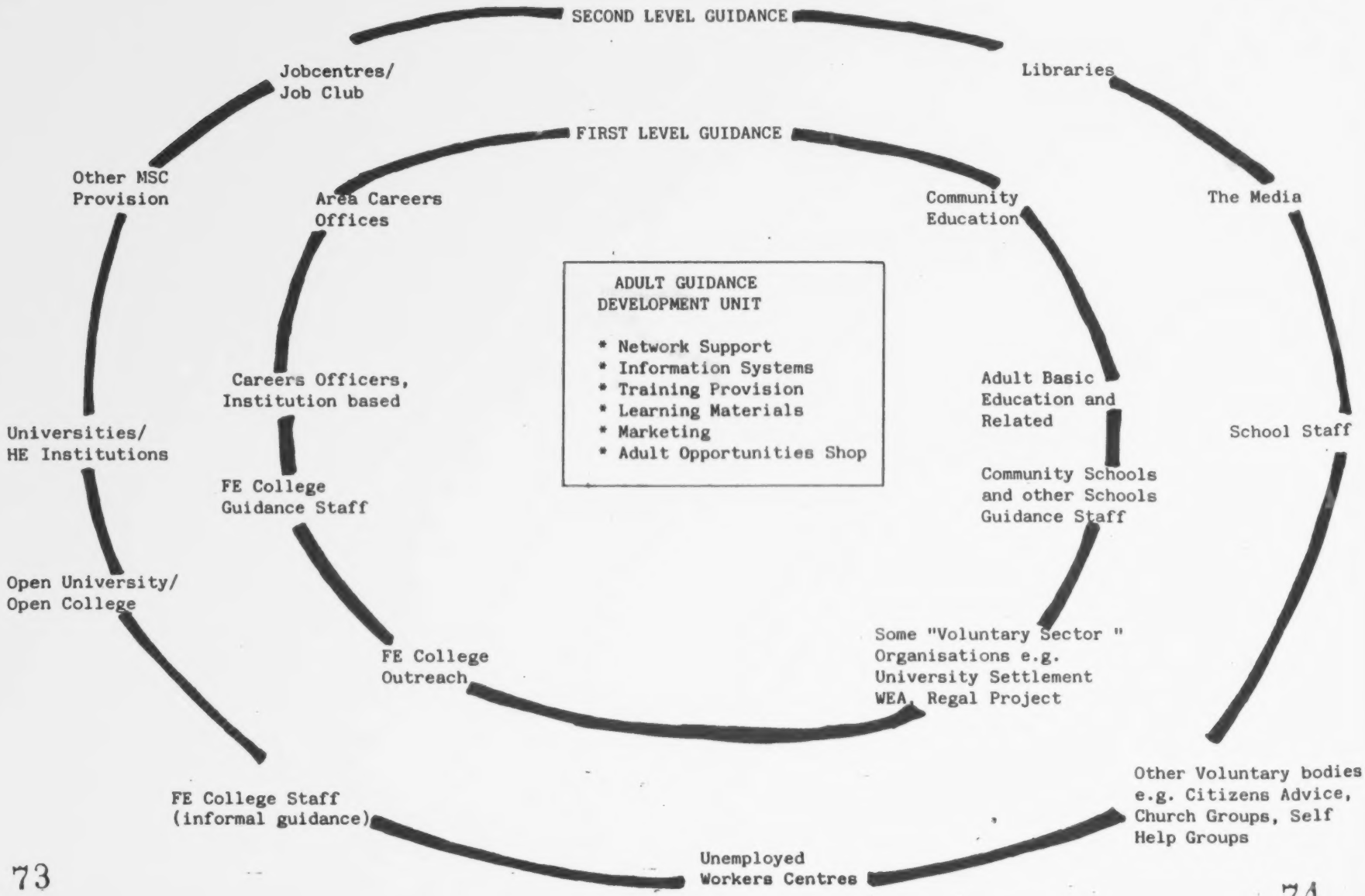
FIGURE 1 THE ADULT GUIDANCE NETWORK - A Model for Inter-agency Collaboration in Lothian



CHAPTER 4 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATORY APPROACHES

The publishing of "Information and Technology in Educational Guidance - A project report" (1), as a supplement to UDACE's overall report on Educational Guidance for Adults represents much of the most recent thinking on the topic in the English and Welsh context and is of immediate relevance in the Scottish context. For that reason, we outline the major issues raised by that document and add comment, reflections and concerns which have arisen from discussing and considering the use of information technology as a central part of an information and guidance system in Scotland.

The Report

Two concerns existed before the commencement of the English projects, firstly that innovations in computer based storage of information on learning opportunities was predominantly concentrated in the higher education sector, an area which had little immediate relevance to the bulk of the adult population and secondly that increase "computerisations" of information might be seen as a way of reducing human manpower costs in what the authors believe to be an already undermanned and only partially developed guidance service, a fear that they wished to see avoided. The project was designed to investigate the ways by which new technology might be harnessed to assist the development of educational guidance for adults and focussed on three main areas, "the provision and maintenance of information - not covered by national databases (especially non-advanced, non-vocational opportunities, including the voluntary and private sector)", the development of comprehensive local access systems and lastly the co-ordination and management implications of the use of such systems.

The report acknowledges the many and varied motivations that people may have in seeking learning opportunities and the demands for information which arise from these and state their difficulty in ascertaining precisely what adult information needs are, because of the paucity of research in this area. However, they state clearly their intention to "treat enquiries holistically rather than in a compartmentalised way" by which they seek to indicate that motivations and demands often defy a simplified administrative categorisation as vocational/non-vocational, educational/personal, social/recreational. Most importantly they underline the widespread ignorance among the public of the nature of which institutions provide which opportunities and draw attention to the diversity and complexity of provision. To label provision simply as courses is to ignore many opportunities which are less formally structured but equally a part of a totality of provision. To illustrate this range of opportunities they

present a two dimensional model of provision which varies on one axis from formal certificated courses, through formal non-certificated courses to other learning opportunities and on the other axis from public information, through semi-public information to private information. The prism is used as a three dimensional model to represent the interaction of these two factors and the scalar degrees of grey between the categories.

In considering the nature of the information that might be stored on databases they select two issues as being of key importance, the accessibility of information in physical and financial terms and in its comprehensibility to ordinary adult enquirers as well as trained guidance staff. By implication the issue of the comprehensiveness of information is raised in the context of permitting users the widest range of choice in access.

Current Arrangements

From visits to existing guidance services and a study of functioning databases, they concluded that a series of problems exist which need to be addressed. These include the explosion of information within adult and continuing education, the lack of any common framework for information between providers, the erratic delivery mechanisms for even brochure based information, the ephemeral nature of much information, the accuracy and updating of information as well as the elusiveness of information on some opportunities. They conclude that as yet no system can be seen to exist since information is held in different forms by many different agencies and that co-ordination between these is lacking as a result of a policy vaccum. Thus duplication of effort and the none accessibility of some institution's specialised information exist side by side. As a result of this, specifying the totality of provision is not possible and the diagnosis of gaps and deficiencies in provision as well as target areas for promotion remains uninformed by any systematic overview.

Into this confusion of information, they argue that technology can bring order and a series of positive benefits for both adult learners and the providing institutions. Such benefits include the powerful storage capacity of the computer, the stimulus for providers to review the overall structure of opportunities via computer records, the standardisation of information formats, increased comprehensibility for users, greater co-ordination in provision between agencies, more rapid and wider accessibility for users through the use of course descriptions in terms most commonly understood. They recognise that the computer can potentially speed up and improve two way communication of demands, responses, problems and misunderstandings between agencies, participants and potential participants but are keen to

stress that the guidance service is and should be more than an information service and that such technological developments should not be seen as a means of staff reduction or replacement. They argue for a client centred information system but indicate that this may still provide major benefits for providing agencies.

While development of national databases has made much progress in the form of the Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Service (ECCTIS), in the Professional Industrial and Commercial Updating Electronic Directory (PICKUP) and in the Material and Resources Information Service (MARIS) and its collaborative network of databases (MARIS-NET) the development of parallel databases at a local level has been less extensive and less fruitful. Among the issues emerging is that of the adequacy of coverage by local databases of the whole range of opportunities, particularly when such opportunities are provided by voluntary agencies and do not readily fit the notion of courses. Thus complexity and volatility of local information are dimensions which interact and may be argued to be inappropriate for computerisation. The inappropriateness stems from the updating costs incurred in a computer system, although the report argues that their selection as items indicating capacity to mount courses may resolve the issue for inclusion rather than exclusion. Once again at a local level the questions of the completeness, accuracy and comprehensibility of information and the costs of their monitoring arise, and the gaps between the descriptions of provision in brochures and the realities are highlighted. The accessibility of such databases, through online interaction as well as by telephone and letter enquiries is highlighted along with the user friendliness of online computer languages. The report concludes that while healthy progress has been made at a national level, "regional and local databases have made little impact on improving access to their information," partially as a result of marginal funding but also because of limited conceptualisation in project design to account for the complexity of local information. Clearly articulation between local and national databases is not an immediate prospect.

Barriers to Development

The report points to the lack of a policy by which regions might coordinate local approaches which has resulted in a "proliferation of non-standard and incompatible systems." Competition rather than cooperation between providers through improved marketing arrangements with such databases is a possibility as are the attendant problems of the control of the editorship of such stores of information. In an underfunded area, such as guidance, the priorities of the few existing

professional workers may well be for increased human resources rather than for new technology. The technology itself may raise fears and doubts in some workers, unfamiliar with keyboard skills, with menu driven programmes or with logging on and off. The very impermanence of screen based information in comparison with print, may raise anxieties for clients, and an appropriate balance between people, print and newer media will have to be struck. Computers must be seen as an additional tool not simply as a replacement.

There is, however, a developing familiarity with computer based information storage and handling in the local authorities as more attempts are made to create databases and as the demands of ECCTIS are met for a standardised form of course description. If such effort is not to be wasted, policy on coordination and standardisation must emerge soon for guidance services to benefit fully from technology.

A Paradigm Shift In Guidance

The report argues "not for tinkering with existing arrangements by applying a little computer technology, but for a paradigm shift from a fragmented and incomplete service to an integrated and comprehensive one....." They see the client at the centre of a web of guidance services which include

1) learning opportunities databases,

2) computer aided guidance systems,

3) guidance workers,

4) printed resources,

the first two being computer based and directly accessible to the client rather than through any mediator. Their view of learning, opportunities is wide and "abandons artificial distinctions between, leisure, educational and vocational information." Far from anticipating that computer based approaches to guidance will reduce the demand for face to face help, they envisage it increasing. They advocate a network of local guidance points which incorporate all four features, but acknowledge that the wide penetration of computers into the public and private domains may make those resources more plentiful although possibly more widely distributed among and accessible to already privileged sectors of the population thus reinforcing inequalities of access.

National Coherence

The report expresses its satisfaction that the three national databases, ECCTIS, MARIS and PICKUP have developed in a coordinated fashion, enabling a single common mode of access to all and in each providing a standard format for information storage and retrieval. At a regional and local level, however, such coordination has not emerged. While individual local database projects have much to offer to others considering setting up such databases there is as yet no coherence between local, regional and national databases vertically, or horizontally at local or regional level.

Avoiding the two extremes of either a single national database structure from top to bottom or the autonomy of totally separate and locally idiosyncratic database structures, they advocate a middle path which capitalises on the strengths of both positions, and they set up a series of criteria by which such an approach can be monitored, assessed and adjusted.

The criteria which should be met for the benefit of the client include:

1) the comprehensiveness of information,

2) relevance to client's purposes,

3) quality of information,

4) accessibility to clients, guidance workers, managers of education and training agencies and all potential social community, commercial and industrial users,

5) confidentiality of personal data on clients,

6) feedback of unmet requirements.

Again this latter point reveals the report's assumption that learning opportunity supply is demand led and can be changed by voicing "unmet demands" rather than that demand is stimulated and created by the nature of learning opportunities supply.

For the managers of database, the report suggests a second set of criteria which include:

1) integration and coherence between local and national database structures,

2) evolution of database in line with clients' demands and with

criteria listed in the client's interests above,

3) involvement of providing agencies in database design and updating,

4) control of the database is an unbiased way,

5) efficiency and avoiding unnecessory duplication of databases and sharing where possible development costs,

6) reliability of systems,

7) evaluation of the system's operation.

While the criteria do provide valuable pointers for the management of database's the complexity of designing effective procedures for the monitoring of any one of these criteria remain unexplored. For example, it is perhaps too easy to recommend, "All parts of the database structure should provide feedback on client's unmet requirements to both providers of learning opportunities and to guidance agencies" if one avoids exploring in any depth how "unmet requirements" can be established, recorded, evaluated and allocated to providing agencies. Is it sufficient to accept that clients are aware of their "unmet requirements", capable of articulating them or is it more probable that we learn and discover our "unmet requirements" as a result of educational and learning experiences not simply as precursors of them?

In advocating a "split system" they nevertheless reiterate the importance of standardised terminology, possibly in standardised ways of information gathering which might be differently used at local and national level. Suffice it to say that the complexities of integrating Scottish Secondary, Non Advanced and Advanced Further, Tertiary, University, Adult, Continuing and Community Education into a truly national yet locally recognisable information database poses an additional set of problems. The report illustrates how a National Education and Training Information and Guidance Network (NETIGN) might operate to achieve such functions. The recommendation of the use of computer based information storage is coupled with an emphasis on the additional use of computer assisted guidance programmes, tailored to suit the perspectives of different adult populations, for example specialist young university graduate career guidance programmes as opposed to school leaver, or adult mid career guidance programmes. It expresses the hope that in future such guidance programmes may become fully interactive with the learning opportunities databases.

Preparing For Coherence

The report opines that the major reason why coherent development of computer based information systems has not emerged is the lack of an overall policy. Calling for cooperation between local and central government, they advocate a gradualist, low cost, but standardised local evolution of databases from existing print and micro-computers stores, predominantly led by local authority initiatives and projects, if not with local authority learning opportunity data. Control, maintenance and management of such a database, they argue, must be carefully organised and they repeat the recommendation made in the main UDACE report that this role "would fall naturally to the Local Education and Guidance Unit." Such databases, they consider, would require the support of a nationally available technical advice service.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The report concludes that sufficient short term pilot projects have now been undertaken to expose the underlying issues and problems, and that it will be wasteful to continue such projects in the absence of nationally agreed standards. Calling on the D.E.S. to take the initiative, they identify key studies that must now be undertaken to develop common standards for a nationally coherent system. Through a suggested partnership with the Department of Employment and the Manpower Services Commission they argue that cost benefit will accrue to each partner along with the benefits of cooperation in the creation of mutually accessible information, which it is hoped will expand further to include the local authorities.

They recommend that:-

1. Relevant agencies, national and local, should take policy decisions to collaborate in the establishment of a nationally coherent framework for the provision of information about learning opportunities for adults.

2. Funding agencies should use the criteria shown above (paras. 3.1 and 5.3.2) when deciding whether to fund development proposals.

3. The harmonisation of existing services at national and local level, in line with the criteria, should be encouraged.

4. The studies outlined in Appendix 6 should be undertaken as soon as possible and a small number of local development projects should be initiated.

5. A national technical consultancy facility should be established as soon as possible to assist those developing or planning new systems in this field.

6. A national mechanism should be created to secure the implementation of recommendations 3, 4 and 5 as soon as possible.

7. UDACE should make recommendations to appropriate bodies on the allocation of responsibility for the implementation of the above recommendations.

MARIS -NET Materials and Resources Information Service - Network.

MARIS-NET is an online information service on education and training managed by the National Extension College and funded by the Manpower Service Commission. It provides a range of facilities, from a 7,000 item database of O.L. materials, to a resources and contacts database, an O.L. bibliography and electronic mail. Subscribers pay an initial subscription of °115 annually and 10.5p per minute of connect time when they link into MARIS computers via the subscriber's own micro, modem and Telecom line. Additionally the service will provide an off line print out of records for approximately °10 for the first 25 records printed out. While the range and size of the database is impressive, as is the Thesaurus which provides the menus from which a subscriber may select information, the information is limited and provides only the briefest indications of the contents of an Open Learning package. For example, a randomly chosen screen revealed the following:-

City and Guilds No 9031,

Content a 16 word description.

Description 2x30 page A4 booklets.

Availability Now - Cost £30 with/without tutoring.

Contact Mr McCullogh etc.

Telephone

In the hands of an intermediary such as a guidance worker, who is familiar with MARIS data it is a useful if expensive tool, however, its accessibility to the ordinary client must be doubted in terms of cost, intelligibility, familiarity with computer based skills and equipment availability. While the system has not been designed for the casual user, it is worth considering as an example of how such systems might operate. For the client who knows what he/she is looking for, it is a powerful tool, but for the uninitiated possibly a confusing and demotivating experience. While MARIS-NET does attempt to cover all media and all subjects,

it concentrates on those materials at technician, supervisory and management levels and by so doing perhaps selects a user group who are more informed than others.

The Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information System

ECCTIS was established in 1983 and funded by the Department of Education and Science and has created a national database of 22,000 higher education courses and is extending its base from 3000 Further Education courses to in excess of 50,000. Access to ECCTIS information can be via computer, telephone, mail and microfiche. It currently holds information on postgraduate taught courses, first degree courses, Higher National Diploma and Higher National Certificate Courses throughout the U.K. and is extending its range of Non Advanced Further Education courses throughout England and Wales and was seeking funding to include the Scottish Further Education opportunities. In 1986 its holding of information of Scottish courses was as follows:-

Post Graduate Taught Courses	651
First Degrees	2005
HND and HNC	552
	3208

Those represented	Full-time	2958
	Part-time	529
		3487

(Some courses are available both full and part time)

Using a telephone line to the Open university's Computer System, it is possible to gain access to the extensive database from a compatible terminal and modem and interrogate it. The system allows a client to establish :

1) The level of course they wish to undertake - (postgraduate to non advanced)

2) The method - (full-time to home study)

3) The Area of the Country (Scotland - Home Courses etc)

4) Type of Institution (University - Polytechnic)

5) Subject of Study (Politics - Electronic Engineering)

The computer then checks its database and shows the number of courses which match the criteria and permits the client to examine each of these "matches" in more detail. Such information would include:- course title, duration, mode of study, qualifications on completion, entry requirement, name and address and telephone of institution, and some information on course structure and content. Like MARIS-NET the question of access must be raised and the role of professional intermediaries such as careers offices noted. While ECCTIS clearly is more accessible with its telephone, mail, and microfiche facilities in addition to its online service, like MARIS-NET it does concentrate on a range of courses that are most likely to be sought by the better educated and more articulate.

Despite this, the amount of information that can be provided is limited, though more extensive than MARIS-NET and it is questionable how far it can do more than supplement more conventional approaches that might be made to careers officers. This is not to denigrate the valuable efforts made in creating this structure, but it is to reinforce the problematic nature of eliciting crucial information with which to inform potential student choices. Information on the quality of course, their status compared with apparent equivalents, styles of presentation by lecturers, ambience etc., which all may be of crucial importance to potential applicants may be the most difficult to neatly contain in a database. The rapid discovery of many young undergraduates that their course, university life, and studentship in general is not what they anticipated does indicate the problems of conveying such perspectives even in convential print based information sources, which may permit greater detail than computer based systems. The arguments for efficiency and economy deriving from guidance and from well informed choice of learning opportunities by clients must depend on information of such an evaluative nature being avialable, yet it is difficult to see how one could satisfy providers and clients that the evaluations are accurate and unbiased. In print form, alternative student prospectuses may well provide potential students with just the information that they do require, although they may not be welcomed by the providing institutions themselves. In information gathering, as in research it may be case that it is easier to gather in more simplified information than it is to get at that which reveals the most important issues: reliability is sought instead of validity.

Training Access Points TAP

TAPS represents another database of learning opportunities which is to be made accessible to the public. It is intended to provide information on local as well as nationally available opportunities and is targetted at the whole adult population whether they be "looking for a job and want to increase their job chances, improve and develop new skills, keep in touch with new technologies ....train new and existing staff." One feature of TAP, is that in addition to the information on enrolment dates, qualifications, accreditation, credit transfer etc. - it is to provide information on "sources of finance, including Career Development Loans and details of public or private sources of finance" (2).

The 18 TAPS, consisting of an Amstrad Computer, a modem telephone link, a keyboard, colour monitor and printer are to be located all over Scotland in "public places such as Job Centres, public libraries, shopping centres, railway stations and airports".

The monitor in its initial state presents a coloured moving screen to attract people, which represents a display board with instructions which offer the user options between local and national information. Colour coding is used both on screen and on the keyboard to make the system as simple as possible to use and to reduce user errors. Local information is stored on an immediate disc while national information is accessed via the modern and a dedicated (reserved) clean telephone line. Passwords are built into the system s software to make the package screen menu driven and user friendly. Access to ECCTIS, MARIS-NET, PICKUP(short work related courses), and COIC-TAP (Careers Counselling) are all available through the one system. Each TAP is accompanied by a flip chart package and a telephone line to a support service so that users can familiarise themselves with the operation of the TAP and get help if they need it.

Rather like the other computers based information systems TAP represents an information export or broadcasting approach in that it makes more widely available already existing information. So far monitoring is possible of the amount of time the system is in use, but monitoring of follow up of information, evaluation of the quality of information are not immediately possible as built in automatic functions. Similarly the feedback side of guidance, by which providers are informed of unmet demands, remains substantially untouched by such systems. Other problems that will need to be continually monitored will be the rationing of user time and the confidence and access of the adult population the system is designed for. The tendency for young boys rather than girls and the young rather than the middle aged or old to feel most comfortable in using publicly visible computer facilities has already been noted at computer exhibitions (3) and is an issue thay may bear consideration with each TAP.

Jobs Information Ideas Generator - Computer Assisted Learning

Jiig-Cal is a system of computer assisted careers guidance which was orginally designed to be used as part of a careers education programme in schools. In recent years the increasing demand by adults for guidance when making educational or vocational decisions has resulted in advisers turning to the school-based JIIG-CAL system for help.

The first part of the system , the Occupational Interests Guide, has helped adults identify their main areas of interest and generate useful discussion with advisers on possible career options. The second stage, the Job Suggestions, has also proved useful despite personal constraints such as age, lack of educational grants, limited geographical mobility, family responsibilities, etc., which render some suggestions inappropriate. Most adults have found job ideas which have given them something to aim towards, whether it be a course, direct entry to a job or an introduction to voluntry work of interest to them.

The Long-term Plans for Adult Guidance

The Jiig-Cal team has begun work to develop a programme specially designed to meet the varied needs of an adult population. To do this properly required major changes to the existing system and involves considerable investment in new computer programs and detailed research into employment and training opportunities for adults in order to extend the present Jobfile information. It is unlikely that this work could be completed before the end of 1988.

The Immediate Solution

In the meantime an Interim programme and supporting resource materials have been produced which, when used with adults, will make the existing JIIG-CAL system more effective. A range of activities commonly found in adult guidance programmes has been integrated into a series of logical Steps which allows adults to review their past experiences, to identify their interests, skills, resources and constraints, to receive and evaluate job suggestions and to prepare plans for the future. Comprehensive Advisers Notes have been produced together with masters for making Worksheets for each adult to build up a Personal Portfolio. Although these materials have not been tested as widely as is normal for JIIG-CAL production standards, work using the materials with a variety of client groups in a number of locations has given positive feedback. This response has encouraged the early release of this Interim Programme to adult advisers who are JIIG-CAL trained.

The Programme has been designed with two aims -

1. To provide a 'core' structure , based on JIIG-CAL, around which advisers working with adults in employment-related and educational guidance courses can build their own programme. Employment Refresher, Access, Wider opportunities for Women, and Second Chance courses are typical of the situations where the Interim Programme may be integrated.

2. To provide a flexible resource which Careers Officers and other advisers can draw on for individual counselling of adult clients.

In both contexts, the Programme is not intended to be followed rigidly. The guidance needs of adults vary enormously and therefore there must be flexibility in providing that guidance. Users should regard the Interim Programme as a resource from which they can select components to meet their requirements.

The 10-Step Programme

STEP 1 - BIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

This exercise may be tackled in a variety of ways to help adults review their life experiences. This leads to an examination of the positive and negative results of these experiences in order to draw up a "Personal Balance Sheet" showing each person's Resources and Constraints.

STEP 2 - CHOOSING SECTIONS

In order to use the Occupational Interests Guide it is necessary for each person to make a self assessment of the correct occupational level for them so that they answer only the appropriate questions in the Interest Guide. This assessment is made using a detailed Section Choice Table designed for use with adults. Comprehensive notes for Advisers cover the difficulties which may occur for adults at this stage.

STEP 3 - OCCUPATIONAL INTERESTS GUIDE

The Interest Questionnaire is administered in this section. Responses to the questions are marked on forms which are usually sent to a computer centre for batch processing.

STEP 4 -SKILLS REVIEW

A carefully developed "Skills Worksheet" is used to help adults analyse the skills they possess and to identify in which skill areas they are stongest.

STEP 5 - FEEDBACK OF THE INTEREST PROFILE

The Interest Profiles for each person are returned and discussed both in groups and personal counselling. The "Personal Balance Sheet" from Step 1 together with the "Skills Worksheet" are used to relate each person's dominant Interest Types to their Resources and Skills.

STEP 6 - CONSIDERING JOB FACTORS

This provides an opportunity for adults to consider factors which are of importance to them when seeking employment. It also allows adults to discuss any constraints which might curtail their freedom to choose jobs.

STEP 7 - REQUESTING JOB SUGGESTIONS

In this session each person registers their likes and dislikes of all of the job factors used by the JIIG-CAL system for job matching and prepares the necessary computer documents.

STEP 8 - FEEDBACK TO JOB SUGGESTIONS

The 20 Job suggestions made by the system for each person are considered critically and a number of jobs are selected for further study.

STEP 9 - JOB STUDIES

The JIIG-CAL Maxi-Prints give detailed information about the jobs chosen for further study as well as information on how well each job suits the person. In some situations Notes of particular relevance to Adults will be attached to this job information. Study sheets are used to gather all relevant information about a job obtained both from the computer and from personal research. Students are encouraged to find out about local courses, funding, employment opportunities etc. in order to access the possible job options.

STEP 10 - DECISIONS AND ACTION PLAN

The final step is to draw up an Action Plan which is possible to implement. The formulation of a plan gives the basis for work on CV preparation, interview presentation etc. which may be tailored to individual requirements.(4)

While this represents a useful advance in the systematisation of guidance approaches for adults, it once again affirms the centrality of a person to person approach in effective guidance, and the amount of time necessary to explore future possibilities.

Collaborative Information projects between Network and Angus Distric Library Service

In 1985 Network became involved with a number of other organisations in collaborative projects which aimed at using bases within the community for the display of a wide variety of information on education, training and health matters. Arbroath Library, Montrose Library, Aberdeen City Libraries and the Cooperative Store in Maryhill Shopping centre were all to act as information points.

A visit to Arbroath public Library was made to gain an impression of the nature of these projects and to assess the contribution they make to improved information and guidance on learning opportunities for adults. The Arbroath project is initially a static display of materials at the entrance to the library. It includes posters, brochures and information on a wide range of topics, F.E. colleges in Tayside, the Colleges of education, Tay Tech, The Scottish Centre for Tuition of the Disabled, Community Education, Adult Basic Education, The Women and Education Forum, Links to Learning (Dundee), Network and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Brochures which can be carried away give information on Health, BBC and Channel 4 Educational programmes, the Health Education Centre in Dundee, local 'What's on' information etc., and is sited near a sign which invites users to "please contact staff" for further information. The library receives brochures and posters distributed by Network, as well as from local providers, Angus Technical College, Dundee University etc. and additionally sells Channel 4 publications.

Staff found it difficult to assess whether the enquiries they dealt with resulted from the Network Display Stands or independently of them. They felt that requests tended to be general and usually referred enquirers to the appropriate agency for further information, be it the local Technical College, Citizens Advice Bureau or Social Work Department. It was thought that only one enquirer had been referred to Network itself in the first year of operation of the project. Staff had mixed feelings about the project and had formed the impression that the project generated more interest among the providers that the public, but acknowledged that the leaflets on display were taken by the public, although they felt it difficult to be certain what uses such leaflets were eventually put to. There was some dissatisfaction with the support that Network provided for some of the broadcast materials, and staff cited a series called "You are what you eat", where the library had not received information

or leaflets to meet public demands.

Requests for information were not classified and it was not possible to distinguish if these had changed as a result of the Network information display. Staff thought that requests for prospectuses would be the most frequent types of enquiries, or lists of what courses the local college had available in the day time. Links at branch level with the Community Education service were thought to be weak, and although the Arbroath and District Education and Leisure Association did use the library for enrolment purposes, there was little further coordination of books as back up resources for this self propelling Adult Education Association. Staff were of the view that the public expected more of the library than it was capable of delivering, they found it difficult to go beyond giving information since they felt ill informed to give advice. While the library had a computer for its own immediate purposes, it was not linked by modem to any of the national information systems nor were staff aware of ECCTIS, MARIS-NET, TAPS as potential information sources. The major concern expresed by staff was for the accuracy of information and for ways of establishing accuracy. They felt that they should do what they believe they do best, provide information and should subsequently refer enquirers who seek further advice.

While this project represents a useful collaborative addition to the process of information dissemination, it is once again predominantly an export model. If providers of learning opportunities and intermediaries such as Network are to derive the greatest benefit from such collaboration, the feedback side must be given considerably greater attention and simple and effective means of classifying, recording and evaluating enquiries must be rapidly established.

[Although a visit was made in passing to the Central Library in Aberdeen to consider their display, it had been dismantled and put into storage the previous day. Staff who were on duty were unsure about the collaborative project but thought that the display had been in the reference section of the Central Library for 6 months after having toured around some of the branch libraries. Pressure of time prevented any follow up or further investigation of this particular innovation but it was assumed that it would be similar in most ways to the Arbroath project.

Local Information Points - LIP Service

Ayr Division of Strathclyde has had underway for some time an expanding information bank in the Resources Unit of the Community Education Service. With local information points set up at Ardrossan Community Education Office, West Kilbride, Kilmarnock and Cumnock Community Centre and with volunteer manning at LIPs

in Muirkirk, New Cumnock and Catrine they are providing a wide ranging community information service for the division. Each LIP has access to the information bank in the Resource Unit, which has produced a Materials Classification System based on the model used by the Scottish Community Education Council's system, although differing in categorisation and coding at some points. The materials are in the form of leaflets, pamphlets, reports, books posters and kits which they encourage for use in enquiries, publicity, displays etc. The 100 categories of information list topics alphabetically from Administration (General Constitutions, committees etc.) to Youth Training Scheme (General) and includes an increasing bank of information on " leisure and recreation, employment and unemployment, housing, health, legal and consumer affairs, finance, education and training, voluntory opportunities and personal matters". An Apple computer is used predominantly for an indexing system, rather than for material storage, and the collection of printed materials is stored in boxed and shelved sections. The computer can of course be used as a search facility for generating lists of holdings under given headings.

The resources Unit has, however, gone further by creating a materials pack - "LIP Service - A Starter Pack," which is designed to assist others to set up their own LIP. It outlines Methods and Approaches for establishing what information may be of value and be sought, the resources both material and human with which to set up and maintain a LIP, methods of administration, Enquiry Records, Contact files, Information bases, Service Provision including telephone answering approaches, Outreach efforts, the use of computers and community involvement. This initiative has much to recommend it in as far as it illustrates the value of a widely based local information service, supported at an area level and which is developing systematic and potentially coherent methods of operation and is beginning to address some of the monitoring and evaluation issues necessary to be tackled if the feedback side of guidance is to become a reality, and if an information and guidance system is to be more than a sophisticated one way broadcasting system.

Innovations - Links to Learning

One example of a small experimental approach to the dissmenination of information about learning opportunities is Dundee's Links to Learning Project. Started as a Community Programme under the sponsorship of the Community Education Service in March 1984, it has employed 1.5 workers for a maximum of one year's work experience. With a remit to provide information on Adult Education, Leisure and Recreation and Sports Opportunities they are located in a small office on the third floor of the YMCA building close to the Centre of Dundee, a location which is both difficult to find even when provided with instructions and not accessible to the casual passer-by. However, by using television time which is allocated for public

service announcments by Grampian T.V., Radio Tay, Press Adverts and by mounting exhibitions in the Main Public Library they manage to create public visibility and attract enquiries from Dundee predominantly, with some from further afield in Tayside and Fife, and as far as Skye, Inverness and Aberdeen.

Its information service is used, in the opinion of its full time worker, mostly by the young unemployed, 18-25 who wish to upgrade their job prospects through studying full time for formal qualifications, though also by older long term unemployed men. Despite its inaccessibility, personal visits were considered to be the most frequent modes of request, though they offer a telephone response to enquirers and undertake weekly outreach visits around community centres. At the time of interview they were preparing to undertake a specialist project with Community Education workers in Tayside on opportunities for those of 50 years of age and over.

Links has placed itself on the regular mailing list for information from local colleges, sports organisations, independent Adult Education Associations, the Open University, Dundee University Extra-Mural Department and stocks Open Learning guides, F.E. directories, prospectives and brochures. Information is kept on these for distribution to visitors and is also transferred to a card index system. The card index system is the main working tool for advice and information, each record being described by a maximum of 6 elements,

1. Course Title,
2. Course Location,
3. Time of Course,
4. Enrolment Procedure,
5. Cost,
6. Entry Qualifications,
7. Date Information Received.

There is no description of course content and no named contact person in the colleges, so advice on the nature and quality of opportunities is severely limited, and the service restricts itself to giving out this information and making referrals. The full time community programme worker, however, had built up some personal experience in interpreting the information for enquirers, particularly the realities of entry qualifications in the F.E. Colleges for mature students and was prepared to advise such potential participants.

The information system is clearly very limited, the more so when it is considered that the project had a computer but that no information had been stored on it. Whether through lack of time, unfamiliarity with its operation, or the lack of appropriate

software it is not clear, however, it was clearly a redundant resource for the project as a means of information storage and retrieval. Likewise, the project had the remnants of a Microfiche system - though part had been stolen and not replaced, which had contained a large amount of information from ECCTIS which was unused and unusable.

While much of the information on full-time college courses was thought to be fairly permanent each year, and past prospectuses were stored, much of the information had a limited life of 13 weeks, and corresponded with part time college modules.

Each enquiry was logged by name, address, telephone number, any personal details offered, mode of enquiry (in person, by phone, by letter), how they learned of Links (Radio Tay, Press, T.V., Friends, C.E. Worker or any other means) information asked for, action taken, date of enquiry, date completed and correspondence and person who handled it. While such record keeping does enable the simplest form of evaluation of the service to take place, it is doubtful how effectively such records could be dealt with by the existing staff to provide a feedback mechanism for the providers of opportunities on unmet demand, or even to provide a sensitive analysis of those who use the service. Age, gender, class, employment status, their purpose and intentions - recreational - vocational are all unrecorded and consequently untraceable.

At the time of interview, Links to learning stated they have no contact with Network Scotland Ltd - because they were concerned with and were in touch with local provision and demand. Similarly MARIS was not used nor was it seen to be accessible though the full time worker would have liked to have a modem so that the computer could be telephone linked to receive information from the Maris-Net system.

Links could not provide in depth Careers advice to enquirers but had good relations with the Careers Office and would refer people, though was aware of the limitations of that service to respond to the demands of all adults. They felt they had a good relationship with local Job Centres and could also refer enquirers to the Dundee Resources Centre for the Unemployed. Close links with the Regional ABE service and the contact made with C.E. workers in the course of the out reach visits to centres have helped to extend the network of contacts that Links has and referrals now come to them from the Volunteers Bureau and Workstart, however, there is no regional co-ordinating committee through which those informal contacts could be made more permanent and the full time worker suspects that there was an inevitable duplication of efforts through lack of co-ordination.

There is clearly a demand for the sort of service that Links provides and that will remain as long as there are limitations on the resources of the Careers Service which can be devoted to the Adult population. The accuracy of the information they provide is probably adequate for most purposes, however, the time necessary for regular vetting of information is not adequately provided for within its complement of 1.5 workers. Information arrives seasonally in large batches and takes time to transfer to the card index system, at a time when it is immediately needed. A preview of information, and a greater lead in time before courses start would help greatly, though the alternative of centrally co-ordinated and duplicated discs for the computer would also be an improvement if a suitable database software package could be agreed upon, compatible with the different disc and micro computer systems.

Similarly strengthening the contacts that Links has with the Colleges through a regional co-ordinating committee might also assist the project to get quicker and more effective responses from the colleges to requests for information.

The priorities for the development of this project centre round 4 issues.

1. The certainty of future funding. Projects such as this which run from year to year with the uncertainty of continuation have to devote a disproportionate amount of their time and energy simply to justifying themselves rather than with improving and developing their service. Long term planning, consolidation and experiment are difficult in these circumstances and hamper development.

2. Accessibility. The current location is less than ideal and the proven advantage of a walk-in shop front operation would add to the public value to be gained from its efforts.

3. The importance and benefit of the existing out reach work cannot be stressed too highly, and it is an area of work where more staffing would be appropriate.

4. Training is urgently needed to support the staff in the project as they have had none so far. Such training might have twin foci, of information retrieval and handling, counselling and advising enquirers.

This is a useful project from which much can be learned, however, it will become increasingly important to incorporate the experience and development of the project into wider national development.

Network Scotland Limited

Network Scotland Limited was formed in April 1984 as a non-profitmaking limited company replacing Network which was an agency of the then Scottish Institute of Adult Education. It's members who are represented on the Board of Directors are the Independent Broadcasting Authority, BBC Scotland, the Scottish Council of Educational Technology and the Scottish Community Education Council. The Scottish Health Education Group and Strathclyde Regional Council nominate directors to the board due to their support and involvement in the company and a representative of the Scottish Institute of Adult and Continuing Education is presently co-opted. The Manpower Services Commission is also entitled to nominate a director because of work carried out by Network on its behalf and the director of Network is a co-opted member of the board. An HMI attends as an informal assessor from SED (5). The Advisory Committee plays a significant part in developments and innovation and in addition to the agencies mentioned above includes representatives from the Open University, BBC Continuing Education, the WEA, the Scottish Council for Community and Voluntary Orgnisations, Age Concern Scotland, the Scottish Libraries Association, Grampian and Channel 4 TV, CWS Scotland, the Universities Council on Adult and Continuing Education Scotland, and Northsound Radio.

These lists of membership are reproduced here in detail to indicate the functional mutual interests of national and regional broadcasting and educational agencies in the development of Network and as an indicator of the degree to which the organisation has developed experience and skills in creating collaborative networks at these levels. Its neutrality and independence of the interests of any one agency is vital to its collaborative networking and to the interests of adult clients which are of prime concern.

The major functions and activities of Network at present involve broadcasting support and referral services for radio and television companies and its claim to provide comprehensive open access educational information services in adult and continuing education for educational agencies and for adults requiring information on learning opportunities. Network originated in the Scottish telephone referral service with the BBC Adult Literacy Project 1974/75 (6) and since then has widened its activities together with developments in the areas of educational broadcasting, adult basic education, open learning, community information, MSC Programmes including TAPS and Open Tech, and Health Education. Its ethos, credibility and approaches to information and adult clients were established in the early years. These are based on the goals of responsiveness,

efficiency in putting enquirers into direct and prompt contact with the relevant agency and a humanistic client centred philosophy. The applicability of these approaches and principles in the field of adult guidance to learning opportunities were and are wider than the original fields of literacy and in numeracy work and Network's record, with extremely slim resources, has demonstrated this in practice over the last 13 years. But the breadth, efficiency and quality of practice in the field of educational information and advice for adults has been severely constrained by the lack of sufficient, secure and sustained funding. In 1979 the final report of the Scottish Adult Literacy Agency (7) to the Secretary of State for Scotland submitted that-

> "The Scottish Telephone Referral Service has played a crucial role in the recruitment of both tutors and students in adult literacy. It is recommended that the service be maintained and developed by national funding in order to ensure that it continues to play a key role in the wider area of basic education and to make a contribution to a national network of information and advice services concerned with providing open access to education for adults."

but sufficient funding from SED was not made directly available to Network for the development of its work in guidance. As a result Network has had to resort to "creative opportunism" (8) responding to requests from a variety of broadcasters, sponsors and agencies in a fairly unsystematic manner. While this opportunism has been informed by the responsive philosophy of Network, its concern for the individual and its concern for "disadvantaged" groups it has not been able, in our view, to generate the funds required for Networks claim to provide a comprehensive educational information service in adult and continuing education to be fully realised.

The experience of staff in Network which currently deals with approximately 5,000 enquiries by telephone or letter concerning adult and continuing education per annum is that information alone is insufficient for a large proportion of adults enquiries and that detailed personal advice is essential for effectiveness. The evidence and experience gained by Network staff in it's pilot project on information dissemination for Open Tech has been valuable and indicates the value of a national collaborative agency which has an information service covering all aspects of education and training for adults. One major reason for this is that any enquiries could not be answered by information on Open Tech provision alone and required the wide range of information held at Network covering the spectrum of learning opportunities (9). This finding would apply to any educational agency attempting to establish an information service if the primacy of the clients interests is to be the major principle of guidance. The evidence supports the principles of collaboration and autonomy in guidance units both local and national.

The full time Network staff is composed of an Executive Director; an Assistant Director responsible for education and training including MSC, TAPS, business and industry contacts and computer led programmes; an Assistant Director responsible for broadcasting support services (this member of staff is also Chairperson of the UK National Association of Educational Guidance Services); two Senior Information Officers; an Information Officer; a graphic artist; a secretary and an office junior. They do share a range of effective experience in guidance, information technology, broadcasting, materials design, development of information and databases and knowledge of recent developments in MSC programmes and SCET, regional authority educational programmes for adults including ABE, FE and the 16+ programme, open learning and libraries. They have an extensive documentary and computer-based databank of national provision and experience in handling and developing these.

They have built up in depth experience of responsive information and advice. They have not used and developed the computer-based data as fully as they might partly due to lack of staff to do so and because given the shortage of resources they recognise the need for balance between how much time is made available for personal advice and interpretation of information and how much time is made available for developing an effective and comprehensive database on computer. Both the potentialities and time consuming difficulties of achieving the latter are recognised and in the meantime it is considered that the necessary human interpretation of information should not be allowed to suffer. The difficulties in achieving an appropriate balance do result in tensions in the organisation which are fully understandable.

In 1981 Network made attempts to develop both its educational information and advice functions and its computerised database. On both occasions the programmes were not pushed through due to staff leaving for personal reasons and no funds being available to appoint suitable replacements. We cite these examples as an indication of how insecure and insufficient funding for guidance units have restricted appropriate developments in the past and to support the case for sustained funding now and in the future.

Lack of resources has also prevented the development of evaluation. There is no follow up of enquiries so that we have no criteria of the effectiveness of Network deriving from what people do with the information and advice that they receive. This is unfortunate as it is difficult to put forward both educational and cost effective arguments for funding in the absence of such evaluation.

A National Guidance Agency?

Network has put forward a case for the development of a national client centred co-ordinating agency for adult educational guidance in its response to the UDACE Consultative document "Helping Adults to Learn" administered by the Scottish Institute of Adult and Continuing Education in 1986 (10) the main points of the case involve the following, 1) the central agency would provide a first point of enquiry offering information, advice and some element of guidance through the choices available to the enquirer. In order to do this the agency should hold comprehensive information on all types of adult learning opportunities available within Scotland, in the UK and where appropriate internationally. 2) The Central Agency should be complemented by local, regional and district agencies to which clients could be referred for face to face interviews and counselling where appropriate. Local agencies in turn could refer to the national agency when it required more information. Local agencies should hold detailed local information and that of an ad hoc, short term and/or ephemeral nature. 3) Both local and central agencies should be independent of any one funder but receive local authority funding as well as funding from providing agencies. Funding arrangements should ensure stability and continuity in the interests of clients, ie the general public. 4) Staff should be drawn from a variety of professional backgrounds including education, careers, social work, libraries or other information services and business and industry these staff will require training. The central agency would co-ordinate national training, offer consultancy to developing and local agencies and act as a forum on guidance. 5) Both central and local agencies should act as brokers between clients and providers and undertake outreach work in the community and in business and industry. 6) The point is made that secure funding would enable guidance agencies to advertise their existance. As present many are unwilling to do so for fear of being unable to cope with demand. 7) It is argued that there is no need locally or nationally to start with a blank sheet and that the formula for national provision already exists in Network. Network claims that it already has extensive local contacts and that it's telephone and correspondence enquiry service is particularly useful for people living in remote and rural areas. It argues that its major strength lies in its first point of contact role.

At present the service depends on heavy professional workloads and the enthusiasm of individuals and volunteers. The need for secure funding is pressed for both local and national guidance units.

Summary and Implications

Network makes a strong case for its central involvement in the creation of a national guidance unit and the evidence we have does point to the need for a central unit with the kind of characteristics, functions and funding argued for by Network and others. Staff in Network collectively do have a) experience and knowledge of the field b) a client based approach c) knowledge and experience in documentary and computer based information d) much experience of collaboration and networking with appropriate national and local agencies e) recognition of the need for independence in the interests of clients f) understanding of "brokerage", "advocacy" and "outreach" functions g) knowledge of the latest educational developments in for example the MSC and open learning and of the importance of relationships between general education and vocationally oriented programmes h) experience of broadcasting and working with the media i) the evidence from Linfo in Chapter II supports their claim to be useful to local units though only within a Strathclyde context at present.

But other than with Strathclyde Network does not have close functional contacts with the regional authorities although these are developing. In many areas and agencies they are not known about and this may be partly due to their fear that if they advertise their services more fully they would be overwhelmed by demand. Network has been constrained by short term funding which has made it difficult for staff to plan long term strategies and priorities. Short term money earning projects may divert the organisation and compromise its independence. In this situation there is an understandable degree of disagreement about purposes, philsophies and approaches. Network lacks a clear institutional base to which other agencies could more easily relate though this may be an advantage in the sense that they are not seen as competitors with for example FE or CE but as an agency willing to assist in the development of local networks. Their work with libraries has not yet proved to be particularly effective and is still in a developmental stage.

Other national agencies which might lay claim to roles in creation of a national unit include: SCOTVEC, SCEC and SIACE. We would support the establishment of a collaborative national unit with the help of SED, MSC and local authority funding and think that, given Networks background, knowledge, expertise and purposes, it would be sensible for the company to be involved in its development.

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CHAPTER 5 BENCHMARKS IN GUIDANCE PROVISION: A SURVEY OF CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

The development of appropriate guidance services cannot sensibly proceed without taking cognisance of the existing bases of provision, however, poorly or well developed they are in each Region. To clarify existing guidance provision, we undertook a limited survey of current arrangements and opinions in Scotland amongst those who might contribute to a future Adult Guidance Service.

We sent out a total of 292 questionnaires to organisations and received a return of 212 (73%) of them from which the following analyses were derived. In our survey we included:- all public library services, each regional careers service, all F.E. colleges, all Central Institutions, each Community Education Service or alternative where appropriate, all University Extra Mural Departments, University Careers Services, the W.E.A, Community Schools in Lothian Region, Adult Basic Education, Voluntary Agencies, and an assortment of other relevant agencies.

Early on an attempt was made to gain permission from the Manpower Services Commission to include Job Centres, however, as a ready, quick positive response was not gained they were excluded with one exception.

Within the sample, an exhaustive survey was made of Lothian Regions C.E. Centres and staff which is presented separately elsewhere in the report, these analyses however, include all the Lothian data.

The Questionnaire and raw data can be found in Appendix II.

The Prominence of Information Giving

While all bar three of the respondents held information about Adult Learning Opportunities less than half considered information giving to be a major function of their work, and the majority considered it to be a subsidiary function, and some an extra function - beyond the normal range of work.

Information Storage

There is very clear evidence that the vast majority (in the excess of 90%) handle the information in paper form - leaflets, pamphlets, papyrus, prospectuses etc rather than in any of the more technological forms such as micro fiche or computer based records.

While some mention personal contacts with educational institutions and specialist books such as "Second Chance for Adults" as valuable additions to the Card Index or list of newspaper cuttings it is rare for mention to be made of techniques such as tape slide as storage and presentation vehicles.

In short, while there is much excitement in the debate about the use of new technology for information handling, the realities at ground level are that access to such technology is severely limited by those who may be seen as key partners in an Adult Guidance system.

The Accuracy of Information (Updating)

The majority of respondents (60%) report that they update their information only whenever new information is supplied while only 10% update twice a year or more. For this majority, their role in information gathering is passive, and this must lead to a questioning of the accuracy and recency of information. If one accepts the position as stated at a recent Careers Officers Conference that 50% of the information in the Central Office for Information on Careers guide (1) is outdated by the time is goes to press as a guide book, clear doubts must remain over the effectiveness of a predominantly passive information system and of its effectiveness as the basis for adult guidance. The question of the effect of supplying useless or outdated information on the morale and motivation of returning adult learners can only be speculated upon but must be detrimental to their interests and may be categorised as bad advice.

The majority of respondents are not professionals in information handling and organisation and the comments that updating occurs "occasionally as an ad hoc initiative", or "whenever time permits" does cause concern.

Monitoring the system and feedback

Almost two thirds of the respondents do not keep any form of record of the requests for information or of the enquirers themselves. Similar proportions of about a quarter keep records of either enquirers or subjects of the enquiry and it is most probable that if one type of record is kept then both are.

While it is clear that the collection, maintenance and analysis of records is time consuming in itself it is difficult to see how the feedback side of guidance that is communicating and establishing demands for new types of educational provision to providing institutions can operate effectively without these elements. Existing arrangements heavily favour supply of information without adequately establishing demand and particularly unexpressed demand.

Similarly, over three quarters of the respondents have no way of assessing the uptake of information by enquirers and the consequent evaluation of the services offered is highly problematic. Without evaluation it is difficult to make the case for funding and allocation of human resources.

Those who do have some means of assessing uptake commented "we check at enrolment on the source of information", although often this assessment is not very rigorous "impressions from staff which I think are important." It is comparatively rare to make systematic use of questionnaires or other tools designed specifically for evaluation and follow up purposes, nevertheless one or two respondents do conduct "an annual statistical survey" and it is perhaps in the area of Adult Basic Education that the most evidence of systematic follow up and feedback are recorded.

Information on Modes of Provision

We asked respondents to evaluate the extent of the information they hold on various modes of provision, classifying their information as being, 'comprehensive', 'partial' or 'none'. Typically, respondents believe that they have partial information about, Open Learning, Flexistudy, Informal Further Education, Community Education and Voluntary Groups.

Typically about a quarter believe they have 'comprehensive' information, half describe it as 'partial', and a quarter have no information, though the proportions do vary a little, dependent on the type of information.

Community education attracts the highest number of claims of comprehensive information, while flexistudy attracts the least claims.

Among the written comments on other modes of provision were mentions of residential adult education, women's return to study courses, the learning by appointment system, The Open University, Schools etc.

While it is difficult to assess how accurate the statements of 'comprehensive' information are, the tendency to describe information as 'partial' is significant and indicative of an uncertainty of the total spectrum of information and the relevance of all of it to the nature of local enquiries. Without any actual information co-ordination base it will remain difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of local information bases and for the many part-time and non professional information base managers to have a standard with which to compare the adequacy of their own local database.

Information on Adult Learning Opportunities

Once again we asked respondents to rate their information from 'comprehensive' through 'partial' to 'none' on thirteen different types of learning opportunities.

Adult Basic Education, and 16+ Further Education were the areas which were most widely believed to be backed up by comprehensive information, but that was still the case for only a little in excess of one third of the respondents. Conversely information on Private Educational Institutions, Adult Education Associations and Open Tech schemes were areas where the largest number of statements of no information were recorded. [This is perhaps more understandable for Adult Education Associations as they are not in evidence in all regions.]

Once again the tendency is for respondents to describe their information as 'partial', however, the data does suggest a sliding scale of effectiveness of information by various sectors of provision. There is no clear tendency for local or national providers to excel in provision of information, though once again the local and national provision and co-ordination of Adult Basic Education does seem to be effective in information dissemination perhaps significantly so when the small proportion of ABE respondents is considered in relation to the large proportion of F.E. respondents in this survey.

A simple ranking of the effectiveness of information dissemination on adult learning opportunities would run from most effective.

Adult Basic Education
16+ Further Education
Scottish National Certificate
Open University Course
Educational Broadcasting
University Extra-Mural Classes
Manpower Services Schemes
School Based Adult Opportunities
The National Extension College
The Workers Educational Association
Open Tech Schemes
Adult Education Associations
Private Education Institutions

Amongst other opportunities listed by very small numbers of respondents were part time and full time degree and mature access and SESTA (South East of Scotland Training Association) courses for volunteers.

Apart from the issue of developing an adequate taxonomy of opportunities which might serve as the base for a nationally agreed structure for information handling, the evidence once again reflects the uncertainty of respondents in the adequacy of the information they hold and the importance of a central database which may assist with information that is nationally relevant. Similarly, the development of any local network must clearly take account of information co-ordination at the local level if effective guidance is to be promoted.

Future investigation might profitably look at the information dissemination strategies of those agencies whose information is perceived to be comprehensively held and to establish any significant approaches to dissemination, updating and network maintenance.

Access for the public

The large majority of respondents (86%) felt that their information was accessible to all members of the public, however, this apparent openness might sensibly be viewed with a measure of caution. Given that participation in adult and community education has been shown to be unrepresentative of the total

adult population (2) (3) it would be surprising if enquiries about adult learning opportunities were any more representative.

Those who commented on the restricted access to their information often mentioned that those who had access were mostly those who were already participating in existing forms of provision, while others commented that in theory "its open to all, in practice its limited to local people", while some of the careers services commented "we don't advertise as an open service - but don't turn anyone away."

The importance of a local hinterland for an information service is again highlighted by the responses of the majority (about 60%) that most of their enquiries come from people living in the immediate vicinity of their organisation.

This is again confirmed by the means which members of the public use to get such information which range from the most popular

Face to Face	93%
Telephone Enquiries	90%
Exhibitions & Displays	76%
Letters of request	68%
Through Outreach Efforts	47%
Computer Access	6%

It is significant to note the prominence of Outreach Efforts, Exhibitions and Displays as foci for adults enquirers which does indicate the value of local organisations contact's within their own hinterland.

Among other more active ways of disseminating information to the public, small numbers of respondents mentioned newsletters, community papers, local radio promotion slots, and television promotions.

We probed further by asking if these access routes were in anyway linked, and while they did not appear to be linked for the majority of respondents some did see a linked and co-ordinated series of approaches, for example from phone call to face to face interview, from letter of request to mailing brochures etc, from press advertising to personal enquiries. While some clearly have a well worked out strategy of co-ordinated approaches, for others

dissemination efforts tend to be ad hoc, sporadic and with little co-ordination and linkage.

This indicates the value of creating in service or distance learning modules which address the issue of the creation and running of more systematic information and advice systems.

Finally while most respondents (77%) see their information as being available for casual browsers, rather less (53%) actively promote information for the public.

Supporting Services for the Enquirer

Almost all of the respondent organisations provide one or more support services for enquirers though perhaps those supportive efforts which are least time consuming are most readily offered. Provision varies from :-

Referral to other agencies	86%
Further advice on opportunities	69%
Assistance with form filling	62%
Individual counselling on opportunities	58%
Direct Assistance with pursuing opportunities	43%

While this sliding scale may perhaps relate well to the concept of variable demand indicated in the UDACE report (4) it is difficult to be certain that provision matches demand for such services.

One simple form of support that a guidance service might make would be to put enquirers in touch with other adults who have already experienced the learning opportunity that is under discussion, however, 8% reported this as a normal practice while 50% replied such contact was rare.

Supporting Information

Many respondents provide other relevant information in addition to that on learning opportunities, for example, information about funding and fee relief for special groups. However, substantial proportions of respondents do not hold such information (some times more than 50%). This must lead to a questioning of the

effectiveness of providing information on a course without information on costs. Once again the issue of the development of an adequate taxonomy of support information and of its national adoption as a structure for information storage must be considered.

Some respondents indicated in their comments that they held other forms of information for example on finance and MSC schemes which are of great significance to some participants, while others hold valuable welfare rights information. However, this does raise the question of the limits to information handling and storage and to the links between educational guidance services and other information bases that already exist and are relevant, the Citizens Advice Bureaux come to mind here. It would perhaps be unwise for all agencies to duplicate already existing information, particularly when other groups such as CAB are skilled in tracing paths through labyrinthine regulations. Local co-ordination will be important in that respect.

Existing Links

We asked each respondent to indicate whether they had formal links, informal links, or only referred enquirers to all the other respondent organisations. While the pattern varies for each organisation, formal links tend to be evident for only a minority of respondents. Formal links with these organisations range from:

With Community Education	52%
With F.E. Colleges	39%
With Regional Careers Services	38%
With MSC	36%
With Leisure and Recreation Depts	19%
With Universities	17%
With Public Libraries	16%
With Central Institutions	16%
With Network (Scotland) Ltd	15%
With W.E.A.	10%
With C.A.B.	5%

Though many more do report informal links, it is perhaps an indication that any existing network for guidance is dependent upon an informal structure, rather than one which is supported by formal regional policies and formal links.

The informal nature of links and the limits within which Network (Scotland) Ltd can promote its information services, perhaps

account for the fact that only 11% of respondents claim to make frequent use of Networks services while 64% report their usage is rare or non existent.

While policy has emerged in some regions only a minority (14%) are aware of clearly formulated policy, 45% believe it is emerging through practice and 39% comment that no adequate policy has so far emerged.

Overall the evidence suggests that local initiatives have as yet been largely unco-ordinated and that there is a national policy vacuum in guidance. Co-ordination and linkage are crucial factors in the development of an effective guidance system and much of the base structure would benefit from inclusion in more systematic regional or local networking.

Training

The majority of the respondents (61%) have never received any specialised forms of training in relation to handling enquiries about adult learning opportunities. Those who have tend to belong to professional services like the careers service rather than to community education services. While there is mention by some of the in-service training, SESTA counselling courses, conferences and seminars, access to training appears to be very patchy for many respondent organisations.

A policy on in-service training/distance learning/open learning on information handling, counselling and advice will clearly be essential if an effective guidance system is to develop.

Among those areas of education and training that are indicated as being most important Counselling and Career/Educational Guidance are most frequently mentioned, with great demand being expressed for Training in Interviewing Skills, Information Handling, Computing and Information. Demand is very widespread throughout the whole respondent group and does indicate that many who work within existing forms of provision are conscious of limitations in their current knowledge, abilities and skills.

Reponses to the survey as a whole tend to indicate that many of the people and agencies who contribute to creation of a base structure and consequently many of the elements which will form

part of the base structure of a guidance service are in place, though the effectiveness of largely fragmented provision remains open to question. The development of more systematic and standardised approaches to information handling and towards information dissemination coupled together with more training in the interpersonal skills and more co-ordination of local initiatives may be sufficient to facilitate the development of a valuable adult learning guidance service throughout Scotland.

Reference

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CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1). In Scotland perhaps even more so than in England the range of learning opportunities potentially open to adults has increased and diversified. But large proportions of the adult population are now out of touch with current forms of provision. The rapid proliferation of learning opportunities in the 16+ programme in both schools and non-advanced Further Education; Open Learning; Flexistudy; Open Tech; Open College; School based programmes for adults; Community Education; Informal Further Education; Adult Basic Education; Adult Education Associations; the Workers Educational Association; Voluntary Agencies; the Open University; Manpower Services Commission funded initiatives such as the Adult Training Schemes (Including, for example, Wider Opportunities for Women courses, Sight and Sound Clerical Courses, Skill Centre Courses)and YTS 2. This has produced a range of programmes, both long and short term with which professionals and public alike find it difficult to keep pace. This complexity of opportunities and lack of famliarity with them frequently has a demotivating effect on adult enquirers and they often lose impetus through the lack of effective guidance services.

2). There is a need for much greater coordination of the learning opportunities offered by the wide range of providers both in terms of curricula and guidance. What is required is a coherent and developmental structure of provision and effective access.

3). In both Strathclyde and Lothian attempts are being made by regional authorities and concerned agencies and individuals to develop and formalise collaborative structures of guidance between F.E., C.E., Careers, A.B.E., Schools and voluntary agencies. There is agreement that linked local contact points, local and/or regional guidance units are required which tap into national and U.K. information on learning opportunities. But all agree that at present there is not an effective network of guidance in place for the majority of adults and that the concerns of younger adults and school leavers predominate. Initiatives tend to be dominated by a school/ F.E./ 16+ menu and curricula which are suitable for some but not for large groups of adults.

4). Effective guidance for adults must feed back into curriculum development. Guidance and curriculum developoment are not seperate items. Effective access for adults and the purposes of learners remain crucially and centrally concerned with "access to what?" If curricula are inappropriate and feed back mechanisms ineffective any structure of guidance will be fatally flawed and technically unsound.

At present feedback, monitoring and evaluation in guidance are rudimentary, embryonic or non-existent

5). Most involved staff feel that there is a national and local policy vacuum on guidance.

6). For effective access for adults to the 16+ programme, Open Learning and other educational opportunities to be created the evidence demonstrates that

a) information alone and self referral are insufficient. Responsive outreach work is required. There is then a crucial role in adult guidance for A.B.E. and C.E. staff. F.E. and schools at present provide mainly on course guidance within the institution. A.B.E. staff have the experience in responsive guidance work and educational programmes with adults but lack resources to develop the work. The majority of C.E. staff do not see the work as a priority and have a plethora of other tasks. Careers are under staffed for such work and not experienced or trained in working with adults or in non-vocational areas. Libraries at present are not bound into networks of guidance.

b) For a majority of adults, data and information requires talking through and human interpretation.

c) personal guidance and human interpretation also require backing up by provision for an adequate general educational base which allows people to locate themselves more clearly, be aware of and be capable of benefitting from the range of learning opportunities available, and be in a better position to make sound judgements concerning their next move.

7). All are agreed that staff in F.E., C.E., Careers, libraries, schools and voluntary agencies require joint training in guidance work. Joint training would assist in the development of cooperation and complementarity rather than competition between concerned agencies in the development of a more comprehensive network.

8). But all are also agreed that problems of vested interest and competition are real and create difficulties for the creation of collaborative multi-agency approaches and for the primacy of the learners' interests. There is no doubt that falling school rolls and F.E. competition for students contribute to these problems. Joint training and administrative/technical approaches will then not be sufficient for the creation of collaborative multi-agency networks but will involve political decisions on the values and

purposes of guidance and on spheres of influence. Sovereignty in various agencies will perhaps have to be surrendered. These issues will have to be tackled or genuine functional cooperation in guidance will not develop.

9). There is general agreement that if effective guidance for adults is increased there will be an increase in demand for provision which cannot be met with present resources. There would also be major resource implications for curriculum development.

10). There is unanimous agreement that short term money and budgeting is harmful to the development of guidance. Permanent staffing and resources are required for continuity of development in the interests of learners. Alienation and demotivation are increased by lack of continuity. It is inappropriate to raise expectations and then to remove the means whereby these may be fulfilled. Insecure staff do not work as well as they might and conditions of impermanence leads to loss of expertise and a lack of sustained commitment.

11). Characteristics of Key Agencies in Relation to Guidance

While there are differences in local strengths and particular inititiatives developed by committed individuals the following major characteristics emerge from the evidence.

A. F.E. and School staff are involved in guidance work within institutions and there are frequently named contact persons in each institutions. There is concern for the development of effective guidance networks and joint work with C.E. and Careers but F.E. staff are frequently unclear about the role of C.E. workers and relationships with A.B.E. are variable. There is a tendency for F.E. staff to see C.E. workers as merely a part of a marketing and information exercise rather than potentially having wider guidance functions with adults. Genuine attempts are being made, but colleges are not yet involving 'disadvantaged' and mature adults on a large scale. The ethos, approach and curricula in many colleges and school institutions are still inappropriate for the learning purposes and needs of many adults despite the efforts being made to change.

Guidance structures and participation in collaborative networks is developing and there is recognition that all staff have integral guidance responsibilities but there is a shortage of guidance specialists and these frequently have heavy responsibilities in other areas.

Outreach and pre-course guidance is limited in F.E. and Schools. If effective guidance for adults is to be developed more resources will have to be allocated to these areas.

B. Careers staff in both Strathclyde and Lothian are intended to play significant roles in the development of guidance for adults. Careers staff frequently wish to expand their role into work with adults and are usually well-regarded by workers in other agencies. The service has a genuine professional interest in developing into an all age service. They have a well based professional structure and are not a providing agency which reinforces their claim to be independent and to recognise the primacy of the clients' interests. They do have well-established procedures of guidance for young people but these are considered by experienced adult educators in C.E. and A.B.E. to be rather too narrrow and 'regularised' to be appropriate to the perhaps more complex requirements of mature adults. Some careers staff are concerned that by expanding their work with mature adults without an appropriate increase in resources they would be in danger of neglecting the requirements of young people with whom they are trained to work.

Careers are short of staff on the ground and need training and experience in educational guidance work with adults which would involve a greater awareness of the relationships between vocational and more general educational development, though some staff it must be said are already aware of these relationships.

There may be major official obstacles for them in developing an all age service and ensuring that they are a client oriented rather than employer led service. Central policy questions concerning the Careers service and its functions will have to be resolved before long term judgements can be made about their future work in a collaborative network of guidance for adults.

It is our view that the service should be allowed, and have the training and education, to develop an all age service and that it should not restrict itself to narrowly vocational advice constraining the development of an adequate general education which may be subject and/or issue based. The logic of the 16+ programme which is intended to be accessible to people of all ages and background implies an all age service.

C. Community Education staff have been given outreach tasks in both Lothian and Strathclyde of contacting mature and younger adults not covered by the more formal F.E./School and Career Service arrangments. But in both regions the majority of C.E. staff do not see guidance as a priority and are unclear about their functions. F.E., Careers, Libraries and Schools are also frequently unclear about C.E. functions. C.E. staff on A.C.P.G.'s and Schools/F.E. consortia are not then as effective

as they might be in the crucial task of improving the quality and quantity of pre-course guidance and outreach work. C.E. staff should not be seen merely as marketing and information units but as being actively involved in discussions and educational advice with individuals and groups. These guidance functions are constrained by a) the training of many C.E. workers which does not develop, clear understanding of the range of educational objectives b) by the wide range of other tasks C.E. staff are expected to perform and c) by a lack of clear prioritisation in their work. There are however a number of C.E. staff who are developing good guidance practice.

Our view is that selected C.E. staff should receive training and clear priorities in developing out-reach and pre-course guidance for adults.

D. Adult Basic Education staff together with those involved in for example Adult Learning Project (Lothian), the 'Improved Access to Learning Project'(Strathclyde) the 'Second Chance to Learn' programme (Edinburgh University Settlement) and W.E.A. programmes for unemployed people demonstrate what can be achieved by specialist and responsive adult educators with adults previously dismissed as apathetic, cynical and/or incapable of learning when they are effectively introduced to a range of choice and local learning opportunities linked with personal guidance. The evidence from these programmes, of which guidance is an integral part, demonstrates that adults, frequently classified as "traditional non-participants" and "priority target groups", may experience cognitive and social development and progressively move into other areas of learning. This range of work in terms of direct provision and guidance provides an essential base for a coherent and developmental educational structure necessary for effective adult access to the 16+ programme as well as other areas of learning. The work is however constrained by lack of human and financial resources and frequently by short-term money, over-worked part-time and full-time staff and insecurity.

The evidence shows that valuable experience for adult guidance work derives from direct educational work with adults especially as guidance forms a normal part of broadly defined A.B.E./ work. That is, practising adult educators make excellent guidance workers, and trainers of guidance workers.

A.B.E. workers are not directly represented on A.C.P.G's and School/College consortia. Our view is that they should be A.B.E. workers have skills and experience of guidance. All A.B.E. workers should have a major role at the base of a face to face guidance system and in the training of other guidance workers. This implies

increased resources for direct provision and guidance in A.B.E. and in appropriate voluntary agency programmes.

The policy question is why, given the evidence, more resources are not allocated and/or reallocated to the permanent employment of A.B.E. workers as essential to an efficient, coherent and developmental structure of adult learning in Scotland in terms of direct provision, the development of appropriate curricula and guidance? The employment of such workers would not cut across vested interests as they would increase the adult market for all providers including F.E. The experience and well informed views expressed in our interviews with staff in Lothian and Strathclyde working in C.E., A.B.E., F.E., libraries and voluntary agencies confirm the fundamental importance of this policy and resource allocation question.

Feedback

The UDACE documents stresses the importance of the feedback side of guidance and does not offer substantial detail on how this should be achieved. We must stress the importance of tackling the issue.

The development of an effective feedback loop to provioding institutions and local guidance services is crucial if a) provision and services are to improve and develop, b) if they are to monitor their efforts and evaluate them, c) if they are to respond with new curricula and d)if they are to justify their continued funding. A detailed system for handling enquiries, client's purposes, intentions and appropriate personal data is crucial for the guidance services to more busy and simple marketing provision and beyond the hope that an "open door" policy will be more effective than it has proved in the past.

Information Technology

1. There is little access either for workers or clients at the local level to new technology and hence to national databases.

2. There is little coordination between local and national databases either vertically or at the local and regional level horizontally.

3. The range of information is often limited and fails to

include important support information on fees, financial assistance, etc.

4. The wider the information base, the more likely it is to serve the client's interest, narrow information bases may indicate vested interests.

5. National advertising, through public service broadcasts does stimulate significant public particpation.

6. Information on higher/further education still tends to dominate database systems - though perhaps with some justification because of its relative stability.

7. Expensive updating costs may properly inhibit the range of information worth storing in computer based systmes.

8. The adequacy of the information held in any base is difficult to establish without comparators.

9. The tendency to over regularise or oversimplify complex purposes on the part of clients should be guarded against.

10. A proper balance between new technology which recognises its strengths and weaknesses must be established with print based and human resources.

11. The need for some measure of standardisation is more urgent than ever.

12. There is a legitimate role for computers to play in the resources of an effective guidance network.

13. There is a need to establish a national policy for the coordination of information which recognises the special needs of handling Scottish Information and also the necessity of access to "national" data which is held be databases in England, Wales and N. Ireland.

14. The crucial role of information technology in feedback in under developed.

15. Technical and administrative solutions to information provision are of themselves not sufficient to solve problems of access to adult learning opportunities.

16. The most valuable information to clients and potential participants may be that which is most difficult to handle, that is information of an evaluative nature, rather than of a purely factual nacture.

We are of the view that :-

1. That urgent attention be given at a national level to the development of policy for coordinating database creation, maintenance and updating at local, regional and national level.

2. That the role of new technology in creating an effective feedback side to guidance to be given priority in further research.

3. That technical support for these initiatives be made available through the establishment of an information support unit as a part of a National Unit for Guidance.

The Establishment of a National Unit for the Guidance of Adults

We are of the view that an independent National Unit should be created and funded by The Scottish Education Department together with funds allocated from the Manpower Servies Commision and the Department of Employment. It would have the following work:-

1. Provision of Advice to the Scottish Education Department and to Regional units.

2. The deveoplment of training for staff at regional levels.

3. The creation of a coherent national database of adult learning opportunities.

4. The creation of criteria and techniques of monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of guidance work.

5. The creation of effective feedback for curriculum development purposes.

6. The provision of technical support to regional and local guidance units and points.

7. Research and innovation.

8. First line information and referral service through Network Scotland Ltd.

The reasons for locating the national unit at such a level are:-

1. To guarantee its independence from providing agencies, it should be accountable to a National Steering Committee with wide and appropriate memebership. The chairperson should have his or her own professional and political standing.

2. To provide it with sufficient influence to assist Regional and District cooperation.

3. To enable the wide range of providers nationally to be represented, including voluntary agencies.

4. To ensure national coordination.

A first line information and referral service could prove to be of particular importance to rural areas.

Network Scotland Ltd. should be closely bound into a working relationship with the national unit with other contributions to the work coming from the Scottish Commmunity Education Council, the Scottish Institute for Adult and Continuing Education, the Scottish Council for Educational Technology and the Scottish Vocational Education Council.

Of the three staff who should be appointed, one should take on an overall policy role while the other two should take on respectively a) training and coordinating in the areas of counselling, advice and advocay dimensions of guidance, b) training, development and coordination in the areas of information technology and the technical support side of guidance work.

In the light of the amount of government funding that has been allocated to the creation of a wide range of adult learning opportunities, we believe that it is good value for money to provide and coordinate an effective guidance system for adults. A clear central policy lead and funding commitment is essential. Ad hoc, amateur and fragmented approaches are neither efficient nor ultimately effective.

This does imply the development of professional training for adult guidance workers and for those involved in the initial and continuing training of Careers Officers,

Community Education Workers, Adult Basic Educators, Further Educaion staff, School Teachers, Librarians and concerned voluntary agencies.

Regional and Local Networks and Units

We have carefully considered the possibility of placing responsibility for developing local guidance networks and units with one existing non-provider agency such as the Careers Service. Such a policy choice would have the advantage of providing guidance with a clear institutional and professional base. We have in the end rejected such an approach in favour of a multi-agency approach to responsibility. The reasons for this are that :-

1. There would be a tendency for other agencies to leave the task to the one selected agency. This could work against the integration of pre-course and on course giuidance as part of each agency's normal work.

2. It could militate against inter-agency cooperation and understanding.

3. It could lead to a narrow and inflexible approach to what should be an essentially flexible and comprehensive network.

Multi agency responsibility will ,however, require the establishment of a Regional Guidance Unit with at least two senior and experienced professional staff and an independent steering group to whom it is accountable. The steering group should in our view be chaired by a person with his or her own political standing who is capable of dealing with problems of vested interest and guaranteeing the independence of the service. This steering group should be made up of representatives from concerned agencies, both public and voluntary and include representatives of participants.

The shape of the network in each locality will, it is recognised, be based on existing strengths and experience but this must not be used as an excuse to leave the network to informal and ad hoc arrangements. There should be a degree of uniformity in arrangenents in each region to 1) assist in national coordination , cooperation, joint work and training, 2) assist in the debelopment of common purposes and philosophy, 3) asssit members of the public to readily recognise the nature and structure of adult guidance services throughout the country.

Resonsibility for the funding of regional units should rest with regional educational authorities together with funding and support from District Leisure and Recreation Services and Libraries. Guidance must not be developed on the basis of short term financing.

The unit would have the responsibility of

1. developing the collaborative network

2. developing databases

3. developing information points

4. developing "one door entry shop front unit" with outreach functions -our evidence overwhelmingly indicates the effectiveness of such units.

5. Training in information handling and in human interpretation and advice.

6. Direct involvement in guidance work.

7. Development of effective monitoring and evaluation.

8. Feedback into curriculum development.

We have also considered the point that resources that would go towards staffing the unit may decrease resources which are badly needed for direct educational provision in, for example, F.E. and A.B.E. We are ,however, now clear as a result of this study that efficient guidance services are in the clients' interests and could provide a valuable basis for curriculum development. There is then no alternative to increased funding for guidance and for the base of direct educational work and guidance in A.B.E. Effective access to learning for adults requires both.

APPENDIX I

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW.

REGION.

DISTRICT.

SERVICE.

CENTRE.

1. DESCRIPTION OF JOB AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

2. NATURE AND BALANCE OF PROGRAMMES YOU ARE CONCERNED WITH.

3. STAFFING AND FINANCE.

4. WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES IN RELATION TO INFORMATION, ADVICE AND COUNSELLING ? WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE CURRICULUM BEING MADE AVAILABLE ?

5. WHAT POLICIES EXIST IN YOUR DEPARTMENT IN RELATION TO I/A/C AND ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ?

6. WHAT POLICIES EXIST IN THE REGION / DISTRICT ON I/A/C AND A/L/O PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO COORDINATION AND COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS ? (CAREERS / LIBRARIES / C.E. / F.E. / VOL BODIES)

7. DOES PRACTICE RELATE TO POLICY ? IF SO HOW ?

8. IS IT POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP A COLLABORATIVE NETWORK OF I/A/C ? LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS ?

9. WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A NETWORK IN TERMS OF
(A) INFORMATION BANKS.

(B) STAFFING AND FINANCE

APPENDIX II

$\frac{78}{106}$ = 74% return

SURVEY OF INFORMATION ON ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Number _____

Region _____

District _____

Organisation		
	Public Libraries	4
	Careers Service	1
	Further Education College	5
	Central Institution	4
	Community Education Service	42
	University Extra Mural	2
	University Careers Service	2
	CAB	0
	WEA	1
	Community Education Centre	0
	Community Schools	3
	Voluntary Agency	7
	Job Centres	1
	Schools	1
	Other	1

ABE $\frac{4}{78}$

(please tick as appropriate)

1 Do you hold any information about opportunities for adults to learn?

Yes [76] No [2]

2 How does your organisation rate giving such information in its range of functions?

A major function [32] A subsidiary function [37]

An extra - beyond normal - function [9]

3 If you do hold such information do you hold it in any of the following ways?

	Yes	No
In leaflets and pamphlets	77	1
Posters	64	14
Prospectuses	63	15
Computer based records	7	71
Microfiche	1	77

Other ways (please give details) _____

_____

_____

4 How often is information updated?

Twice a year or more [7] Yearly [15]

Less than yearly [1] Whenever it is supplied [52] N/A 3

Other _____

(please tick as appropriate)

5 Do you keep any records of the types of requests or of the enquirers?

	YES	NO
No records kept	55	23
Details of enquirers	19	59
Details of subjects of enquiry	18	60

6 Do you have any means of assessing the uptake from enquirers?

Yes 21 No 57

If yes, please give details _____

_____

_____

7 Do you hold information on any of the following modes of provision?

	Comprehensive	Partial	None
Open Learning	6	48	24
Flexistudy	8	34	36
Informal Further Education	19	43	16
Community Education	32	34	12
Voluntary Groups	13	49	16

Others (please give details) _____

_____

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

8 Do you hold information about any of the following areas of adult learning opportunities?

	Comprehensive	Partial	None
Scotvec - Scottish national certs	16	22	40
16+ further education	17	44	17
School based adult opportunities	12	41	25
Adult Basic Education	32	34	12
Manpower Services schemes	12	39	27
Open Tech schemes	2	26	50
Workers Educational Association	12	41	25
University Extra-Mural classes	11	40	27
Adult Education Associations	2	28	48
Open University courses	17	40	21
National Extension College	6	28	44
Educational broadcasting	10	48	20
Private educational institutions	0	19	59

Others (please give details) _____

_____

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

9 Do all members of the adult public have access to the information you hold?

Yes [63] No [15]

If the answer is no, which groups do have access _____

_____

_____

10 To what extent do enquiries come from people living in the immediate locality of your organisation?

The vast majority [29] A good proportion [26]

Relatively few [21] N/A 2

11 a) How do the public get access to the information? (indicate by a double tick the most frequent)

	Yes	No
Face to face	73	5
Telephone enquiry	63	15
Letters of request	40	38
Computer access	2	76
Exhibitions - Displays	59	19
Outreach efforts	32	46

Other (please indicate) _____

_____

_____

b) Are these activities linked in any way, and if so, how?

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

12 Is the information available in any of the following ways?

	Yes	No
Available to casual browsers	61	17
Available on request only	29	49
Actively promoted for the public	44	34

13 In addition to the provision of information, do you provide any of the following supporting services?

	Yes	No
Referral to other agencies	69	9
Further advice on opportunities	50	28
Individual counselling on opportunities	46	32
Direct assistance in pursuing opportunities	37	41
Assistance with form filling	53	25

14 Do you have any means of establishing contact between enquirers and adults who have taken up those learning opportunities?

Usually	7	Sometimes	26
Rarely	42	N/A	3

(please tick as appropriate)

15 Do you provide any information of the following kinds?

	Yes	No
Funding from SED	36	42
Bursaries from the District Council	27	51
Financial assistance from the Region	47	31
Fee relief for the unemployed	54	24
Fee relief for other groups (eg OAP, single parent)	46	32
Charities	34	44
Appropriate application forms	36	42

Other financial aids (please give details) _____

_____

16 Do you have formal link/informal links with the following organisations for the purposes of coordinating information?

	Refer Enquirers	N/A Only	Informal Link	Formal Link
Public Libraries	32	14	21	11
District Leisure & Recreation	27	12	28	11
Regional Careers Service	15	10	28	25
Further Education Colleges	25	9	22	22
Manpower Services Commission	26	16	18	18
Community Education Service	9	8	12	49
Universities	32	13	24	9
Central Institutions	36	17	18	7
Workers Education Association	28	9	37	4
Citizens Advice Bureau	29	7	37	5
Network (Scotland Ltd)	37	27	8	6

(please tick as appropriate)

17 Do you make use of the services of Network (Scotland Ltd)?

Frequently [2] Occasionally [10] Rarely [64] N/A 2

18 Have you or do you or your colleagues received any specialised forms of training in relation to handling enquiries about adult learning opportunities?

Frequently [6] Sometimes [29] Never [42] N/A 1

Please indicate the nature of the training _____

_____

19 What do you consider to be the areas in which training is most needed?

_____

_____

_____

20 Is there any clear policy established for the provision and coordination of information and guidance for adults by your organisation?

Clearly formulated policy [8] Policy is emerging through practice [26]

No adequate policy developed so far [42] N/A 2

Thank you once again for your help - I am most grateful for your cooperation and welcome your participation in this research project.

T G Steward

APPENDIX III

$\frac{212}{292}$ = 73% return

SURVEY OF INFORMATION ON ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Number _____

Region _____

District _____

Organisation

Public Libraries	38
Careers Service	14
Further Education College	39
Central Institution	10
Community Education Service	57
University Extra Mural	8
University Careers Service	7
CAB	0
WEA	3
Community Education Centre	0
Community Schools	3
Voluntary Agency	7
Job Centres	1
Schools	1
Other	3
ABE	21
	212

BORDERS	8
GRAMPIAN	11
LOTHIAN	78
STRATHCLYDE	57
HIGHLAND	6
CENTRAL	12
WESTERN ISLES	7
ORKNEY	0
SHETLAND	2
DUMFRIES	6
TAYSIDE	11
FIFE	14
TOTAL	212

(please tick as appropriate)

1 Do you hold any information about opportunities for adults to learn?

Yes [209] No [3]

2 How does your organisation rate giving such information in its range of functions?

A major function [86] A subsidiary function [102]

An extra - beyond normal - function [21] N/A 3

3 If you do hold such information do you hold it in any of the following ways?

	Yes	No
In leaflets and pamphlets	[205]	[7]
Posters	[166]	[46]
Prospectuses	[178]	[34]
Computer based records	[19]	[193]
Microfiche	[5]	[207]

Other ways (please give details) _____

_____

_____

4 How often is information updated?

Twice a year or more [22] Yearly [51]

Less than yearly [3] Whenever it is supplied [129] N/A 7

Other _____

(please tick as appropriate)

5 Do you keep any records of the types of requests or of the enquirers?

		No
No records kept	137	75
Details of enquirers	57	155
Details of subjects of enquiry	59	153

6 Do you have any means of assessing the uptake from enquirers?

Yes [51] No [161]

If yes, please give details _____

_____

_____

7 Do you hold information on any of the following modes of provision?

	Comprehensive	Partial	None
Open Learning	44	127	41
Flexistudy	24	96	92
Informal Further Education	68	114	30
Community Education	76	98	38
Voluntary Groups	34	127	51

Others (please give details) _____

_____

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

8 Do you hold information about any of the following areas of adult learning opportunities?

	Comprehensive	Partial	None
Scotvec - Scottish national certs	73	78	61
16+ further education	76	105	31
School based adult opportunities	36	96	80
Adult Basic Education	80	95	37
Manpower Services schemes	46	114	52
Open Tech schemes	26	97	89
Workers Educational Association	32	97	83
University Extra-Mural classes	46	102	64
Adult Education Associations	16	84	112
Open University courses	63	110	39
National Extension College	34	91	87
Educational broadcasting	57	111	44
Private educational institutions	4	63	145

Others (please give details) _____

_____

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

9 Do all members of the adult public have access to the information you hold?

Yes [183] No [29]

If the answer is no, which groups do have access _____

_____

_____

10 To what extent do enquiries come from people living in the immediate locality of your organisation?

The vast majority [127] A good proportion [48]

Relatively few [35] N/A 2

11 a) How do the public get access to the information? (indicate by a double tick the most frequent)

	Yes	No
Face to face	199	13
Telephone enquiry	191	21
Letters of request	145	67
Computer access	13	199
Exhibitions - Displays	162	50
Outreach efforts	100	112

Other (please indicate) _____

_____

_____

b) Are these activities linked in any way, and if so, how?

_____

(please tick as appropriate)

12 Is the information available in any of the following ways?

	Yes	No
Available to casual browsers	164	48
Available on request only	74	138
Actively promoted for the public	114	98

13 In addition to the provision of information, do you provide any of the following supporting services?

	Yes	No
Referral to other agencies	184	28
Further advice on opportunities	147	65
Individual counselling on opportunities	124	88
Direct assistance in pursuing opportunities	92	120
Assistance with form filling	133	79

14 Do you have any means of establishing contact between enquirers and adults who have taken up those learning opportunities?

Usually	18	Sometimes	78
Rarely	108	N/A	8

(please tick as appropriate)

15 Do you provide any information of the following kinds?

	Yes	No
Funding from SED	126	86
Bursaries from the District Council	92	120
Financial assistance from the Region	136	76
Fee relief for the unemployed	139	73
Fee relief for other groups (eg OAP, single parent)	121	91
Charities	95	117
Appropriate application forms	101	111

Other financial aids (please give details) _____

_____

16 Do you have formal link/informal links with the following organisations for the purposes of coordinating information?

	Refer Enquirers Only	Informal Link	Formal Link
Public Libraries	50	93	35
District Leisure & Recreation	62	71	42
Regional Careers Service	34	72	81
Further Education Colleges	49	64	83
Manpower Services Commission	50	56	78
Community Education Service	26	51	112
Universities	81	64	37
Central Institutions	93	52	34
Workers Education Association	81	74	23
Citizens Advice Bureau	80	94	11
Network (Scotland Ltd)	78	46	33

(please tick as appropriate)

17 Do you make use of the services of Network (Scotland Ltd)?

Frequently [24] Occasionally [48] Rarely [137]

18 Have you or do you or your colleagues received any specialised forms of training in relation to handling enquiries about adult learning opportunities?

Frequently [11] Sometimes [69] Never [130] N/A 2

Please indicate the nature of the training _____

_____

19 What do you consider to be the areas in which training is most needed?

_____

_____

_____

20 Is there any clear policy established for the provision and coordination of information and guidance for adults by your organisation?

Clearly formulated policy [31] Policy is emerging through practice [96]

No adequate policy developed so far [83] N/A 2

Thank you once again for your help - I am most grateful for your cooperation and welcome your participation in this research project.

T G Steward